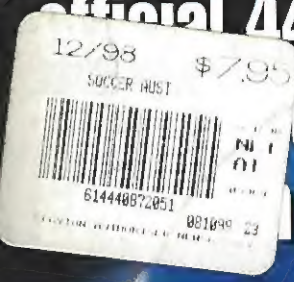


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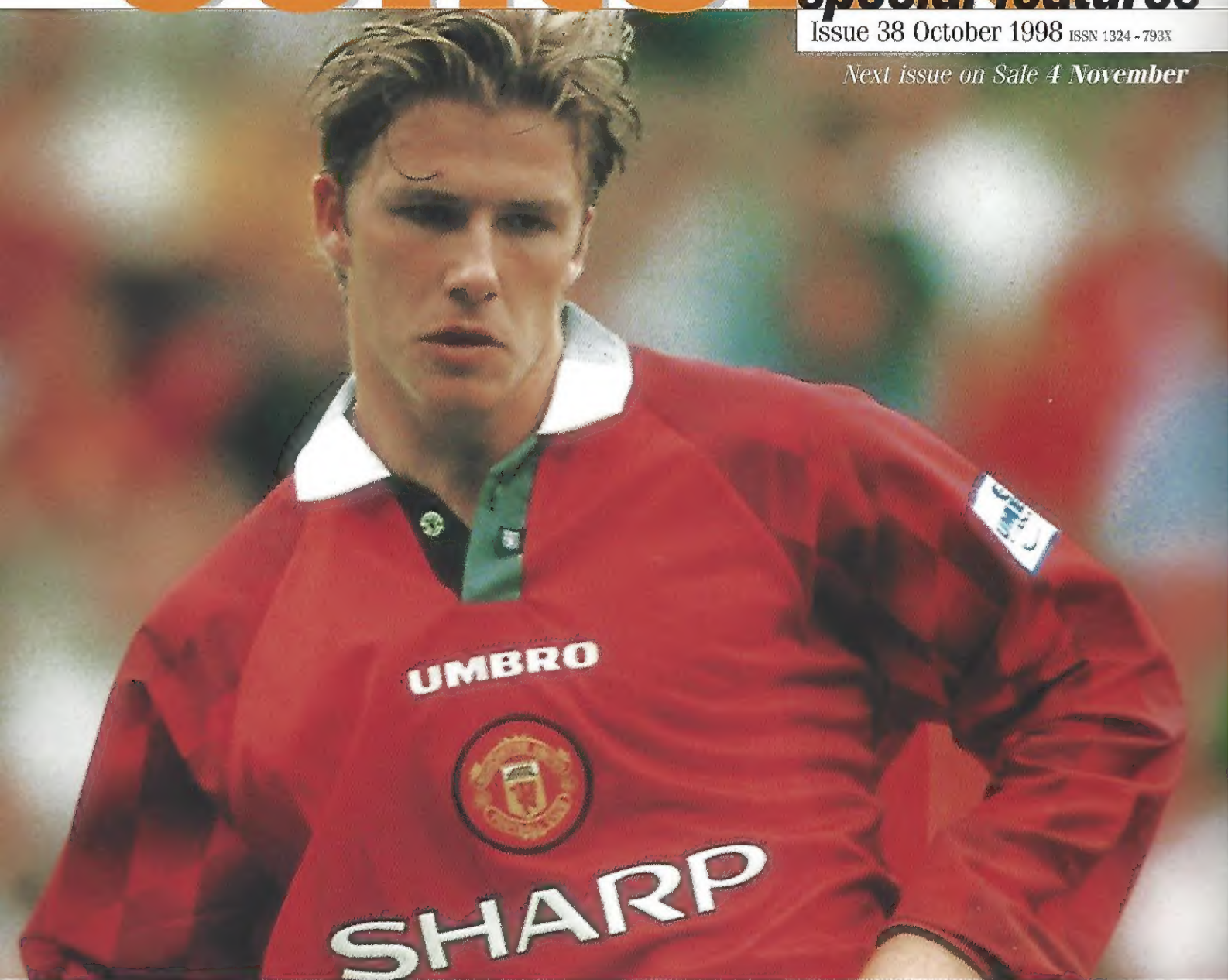


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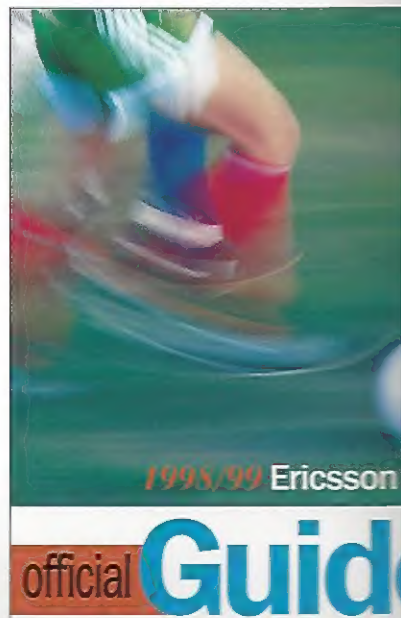
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Since the final whistle blew to end the 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Grand Final in May our footballing diet has been limited almost exclusively to hours huddled by the television watching action beamed in from around the globe.

With an albeit joyful World Cup winter now behind us, the Ericsson Cup swings back into action for what promises to be another landmark domestic season. And with our fabulous free ticket offer, we'll be with you all the way down the road to the grand final. Soccer Australia intends to provide second-to-none analysis of the season ahead, in fact our focus on the un-folding drama of the 1998/99 season starts in this preview edition as we feature the official Soccer Australia Ericsson Cup 44-page guide, starting on page 24.

And our commitment to the local game doesn't end there, because to help fill the terraces and grandstands at all the Ericsson Cup venues this summer Soccer Australia will once again feature its remarkably popular complimentary entry tickets over the course of the season.

The tickets proved a raging success for all the clubs who participated in the program last year and Soccer Australia would like to go on record to thank and the clubs who have shown commendable foresight in linking up with this magazine once again.

The inclusion of Northern Spirit adds another intriguing dimension to a thriving national competition and just to help whet your appetites this issue of Soccer Australia features an in-depth profile on the newest club in the competition. Of course there will be plenty of emphasis on the national teams, as well as exclusive coverage of the major European competitions such as Italy's Serie A and the English Premiership.

Our English Premier League preview and an exclusive behind-the-scenes at Chelsea are featured in this edition.

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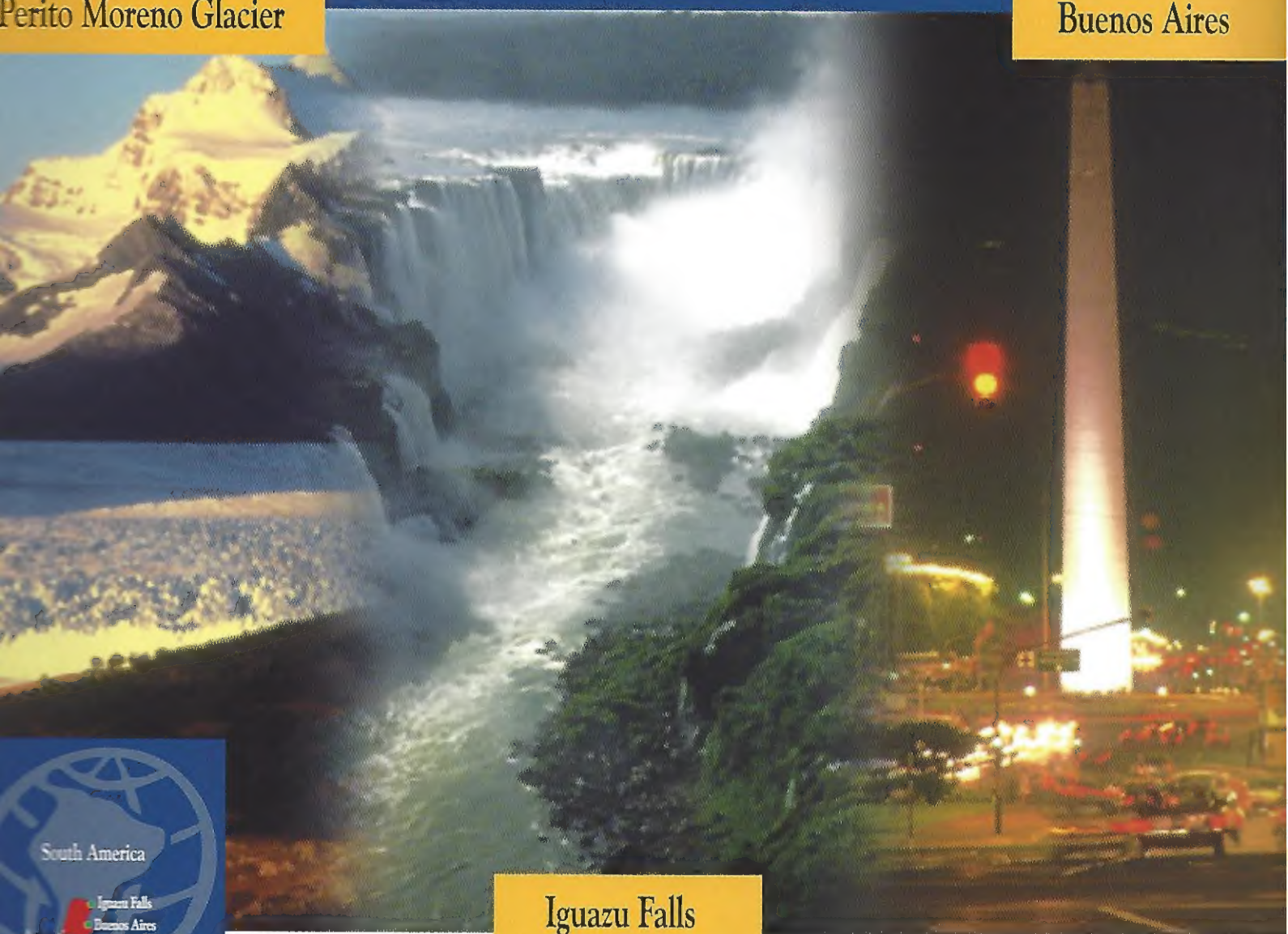
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## Keeping Aussies in the Limelight

The English soccer media is finally waking up to something Australian fans have known for some time - that this country produces an extraordinary number of top class goalies. The English newspaper 'The Guardian' recently published a list of Aussie goalkeepers, under the heading 'They're overstretched and over here'. Published after the first game of the 1998/99 season, it indicated that none of the four Australian between the sticks on the opening day of the Premiership conceded a goal, an amazing achievement.

**MARK BOSNICH** - saved John Collins' penalty in Villa clean sheet (against Everton).

**SASA ILIC** - saved Richard Rufus' blushes (the Charlton defender sheet (against Newcastle United).

**MARK SCHWARZER** - saved from Aussie Kewell in Middlesbrough clean sheet (against Leeds United).

**JOHN FILAN** - saved a point in Blackburn clean sheet (against Derby).

**FRANK TALIA** - back in favour as Swindon shot-stopper.

**JASON KEARTON** - blooming at Crewe after Everton nightmare (Kearton spent several years in Everton's reserve team as understudy to veteran keeper Neville Southall).

**ANDREW PETTERSON** - poised for the Premiership as Ilic understudy.

**STEVE MAUTONE** - his Reading replacement has already let in seven goals.

**ZELJKO KALAC** - tall guy to fall guy at Leicester and Portsmouth.

**TYNAN SCOPE** - headline writer's delight in reserve at Coventry.

**IAN HEALY** - hoping to impress scouts on England tour.



Mark Bosnich



## A STROLL AROUND THE WORLD GAME



## CHAMP'S MILESTONE

After adding championship-winning skipper to his already impressive career CV last season the little master, Paul Trimboli, is poised on the brink of another major milestone coming into the 1998/99 season.

The South Melbourne captain is a mere seven goals away from joining the elite list of Ericsson Cup players to have played 300 or more career games and scored 100 or more goals.

Trimboli, now on 318 games, passed his 300-game milestone last season and if he brings up his century of goals this season he will join recently-retired Rod Brown (347 games/137 goals) and Marshall Soper (318/120) as the only players to have completed such an impressive 'double treble'.

## Own Goal For Media



Carlton's Sean Douglas

Given that historically rugby league in Victoria has been about as popular as boils or root canal work an extraordinary amount of media time and space was devoted to the achievements of Melbourne Storm as the AFL rookies prepared for that competition's semi-final series.

And good luck to the new boys too, to finish top four in the club's maiden season is a magnificent effort.

But you have to question the professionalism of the mainstream sporting media as they ignorantly sing the gushing praises of Storm, apparently completely ignoring the achievement of Carlton Soccer Club just six months ago.

If you believe the Melbourne media neither Carlton - nor the Ericsson Cup competition for that matter - exist.

One who should know better is Tom Hafey, a three-club AFL Premiership-winning coach who prides himself on having a broad interest in all sports.

Yet in Melbourne's 'Herald Sun', according to Hafey, "what they (Storm) have achieved this year has been staggering. You look at other teams that have been established in other codes, they have struggled to win games. "They have just been percentage boosters for the opposition," he concluded.

For the record, Carlton's effort of going all the way to the grand final in season one (1997/98) is the best first-up effort by any new franchise in any of the major league footy codes played in this country.



Coach - Graham Arnold



The national league's newest club, ambitious Northern Spirit, will be hoping to follow in the wake of Carlton's first-up success last summer.

History is heavily weighted against the experimental Sydney-based club making any on-field impact, at least not this season.

But remarkable Carlton proved an exception to the general rule by literally going within ten minutes of a national championship in its first season when the Blues fell to a late South Melbourne goal in the 1997/98 Grand Final.

Carlton's first season was far and away the best-ever produced by a newcomer to this competition.

Before Carlton's barnstorming grand final run last year Perth Glory had been the best performed of all the recent newcomers, sitting inside the top six for 16 weeks in the summer of 1996/97 before dropping out on the very last day of the season.

Brisbane's entry to the big-time in 1991/92 produced a top six finish in season one; unfortunately the Strikers' sixth place finish was one year before the finals series was expanded from a top five play-off series.



Wollongong City has now been around for 19 seasons and is still waiting to crack it for the championship while eleven of the 24 teams promoted since 1977 are yet to play in a finals game at all.

Three clubs - Collingwood, Canterbury and Wollongong Mac lasted only one year in the big time, and nine of the 24 lasted less than seven years at the elite level.



Melbourne Zebras, now Bulleen Inter-Kings produced the best effort of a newly promoted team by winning the title in 1985, just one year after promotion.

Apia Leichhardt, which joined the league in 1979, took eight years to break through when it sealed the last of the league's first-past-the-post titles in 1987.

The Melbourne Knights took twelve years before they clinched the 1994/95 title and the Brisbane Strikers took six years to build a successful team after joining the league in 1991/92.

They are the only four non-original member clubs to have clinched a national title.

For the record, the original 14 national league clubs were Marconi Fairfield, Sydney Olympic, St George, Heidelberg United (then Fitzroy United), Melbourne City (then Footscray JUST), South Melbourne, Adelaide City, Adelaide Sharks (then West Adelaide), Canberra City, Brisbane City, Brisbane Lions, Mooroolbark, Western Suburbs and Sydney City (then Eastern Suburbs Hakoah)



Just three of the 24 clubs promoted to the Ericsson Cup competition since the competition was founded in 1977 have made the finals or finished in the ladder top six in their first season in.

Two of them - the Melbourne Knights and Melbourne Zebras (then Juventus) - made the finals when the going was at its best in 1984, the year the league split into two divisions of twelve teams each.

Making Carlton's grand final run last season appear even more exceptional.

## PROMOTION BLUES FOR NEWCOMERS

Year	Club	Finished
1978	Newcastle United	11th
1979	Apia Leichhardt	8th
1980	Blacktown City	11th
1981	Wollongong City	11th
1981	Preston	12th
1984	Melbourne Knights	3rd
1984	Melbourne Zebras	5th
1984	Green Gully	9th
1984	Sunshine Geo. Cross	12th
1984	Sydney United	6th
1984	Penrith City	7th
1984	Parramatta Eagles	11th
1984	Newcastle Rosebud	8th
1985	Inter Monaro	7th
1986	Canterbury	11th
90/91	Wollongong Mac	14th
91/92	Brisbane Strikers	6th
91/92	Newcastle Breakers	11th
92/93	Gippsland Falcons	12th
95/96	Canberra Cosmos	9th
96/97	Collingwood Warriors	13th
96/97	Perth Glory	7th
97/98	Carlton	2nd
98/99	Northern Spirit	?



# HILL GOES OUT ON A SAD NOTE inevitably the pundits get it right

The man soccer wooed with remarkable  
and then turned on in numbers with  
enthusiasm, David Hill, has quit as  
man of Soccer Australia.  
At the same time Mr Hill also resigned  
post as chairman of Sydney Water,  
saying he wanted to concentrate on his bid  
in the NSW seat of Hughes at the next  
federal election.

Although his resignation from SA  
had been predicted - even eagerly  
anticipated in some quarters - for several  
months following his pre-selection as  
the Labor candidate for Hughes, Hill  
eventually decided to holster his six-guns  
and ride into the sunset in the wake of the  
possible realisation of Australia's World Cup  
dreams.

Only days before the late August  
announcement of his demise Soccer  
Australia staff writer Philip Micallef broke  
the story that the Asian Football  
Confederation had finally conceded that it  
would welcome the Socceroos in a full  
World Cup qualifying series with the Asian  
nations.

Micallef quoted Asian Football  
Confederation general secretary Peter  
Velappan as saying that "if FIFA retains the  
quota of four Asian representatives for  
2002, plus co-hosts Japan and South  
Korea, and Australia ask to join us, I don't  
think that Asia would oppose the proposal  
because it is quite reasonable.

"We are fair and open-minded," said  
Velappan, explaining the dramatic about-  
face of the AFC. "We are, after all, looking  
for an overall improvement in the football  
standard in this region."

Obviously buoyed by the news, Hill  
called the possibility of finally manouvering  
Australia into qualification via the preferred  
Asian route "terrific news for Australian  
soccer".

"We must avoid at all costs a repeat of  
last year's situation when we were knocked  
out while still undefeated. In fact, we and  
France are the only teams in the world that  
did not lose a match in the whole 1998  
competition."

Soccer Australia is currently preparing a  
submission to FIFA outlining its preferred  
options for a qualifying path for 2002  
and beyond.

As for Hill, it is now likely that a stream-  
lined World Cup qualifying path for  
Australia, something he has passionately  
fought to achieve, will be his final legacy to  
the game, although not his only one.

His departure also follows in the wake of  
a lucrative commercial television deal for  
soccer which Hill had been adamant was  
essential to the future of the code.

Accused of being overly autocratic,  
dictatorial and abrasive, Hill made more  
than his share of mortal enemies within the  
game - but he is neither the first or last to  
do so. It is not hard to do.

Lured into the game as a leader with the



tential to ensure a "sea change" at administrative level, at least Hill will bow to the vilified for his penchant for activity, as opposed to the inactivity of some of his predecessors.

Ironically, his first real confrontation with the old guard has proved to be, in hindsight, a resounding victory for Hill.

Hill's administration had no qualms about battling through a protracted, time-consuming, expensive and embarrassing legal duel when it was decided to streamline a stagnant national league by ditching Parramatta Eagles, Brunswick Juventus and Heidelberg United for the 1995/96 season.

Parramatta can be considered unlucky, but Heidelberg has since predictably tumbled to ignominious relegation from Victoria's Premier League and then-ailing Brunswick no longer even exists in its own right.

In contrast, the trade-ups have been stylishly effective, with Perth Glory and Carlton SC about to be joined by Northern Spirit as the bold new shop-fronts for the Fussion Cup into the next millennium.

Initial expressions of concern turned to angry vitriol as Hill's administration further antagonised many of the long-established ethnic-based clubs by banning nationalistic insignias, team names and uniforms.

Although the clubs eventually and mostly reluctantly adhered to the decision, the fact that such a dramatic edict was justified by SA as the key to commencing a national merchandising and marketing campaign which never eventuated, appears to have been conveniently forgotten.

The late-1996 signing of flamboyant former England boss Terry Venables as Socceroo coach further polarised the soccer community.

Seen as a recruiting and publicity coup in some quarters and dismissed by others - SBS-TV's Les Murray called it the "height of silliness" - the capture of Venables only served to underscore the great divide opening between Hill's supporters and his detractors.

For all the successes on and off the field under 'Oz Tel' Hill's tenure was always going to be limited when the Socceroos crumbled at the final hurdle at the MCG last November; the World Cup failure the cue for the vultures to

And that in itself is the greatest tragedy, as soccer once again managed to perpetuate the game's ugly image in this country.

Witness the *'Australian'* newspaper's sport section just days after the chairman's



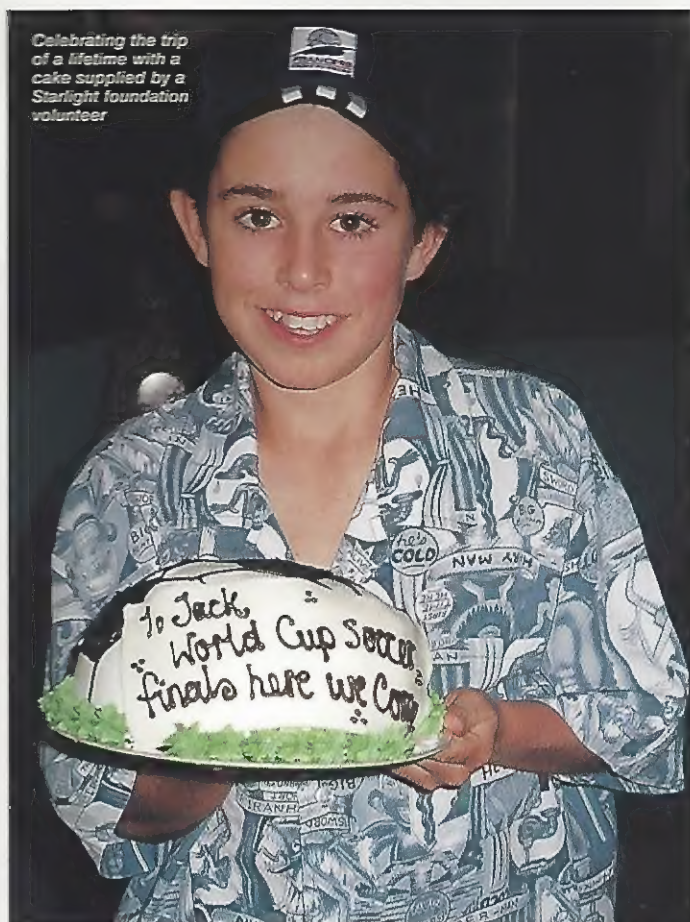
commence circling.

Hill's penchant for going toe-to-toe with his antagonists, whether it be the players union, journalists or club officials, meant there were plenty waiting to put the boot in - sadly, many of them were prepared to do so very publicly.

announcement, with a huge cartoon caricature of Hill walking away from soccer with several daggers firmly planted in his back because he "couldn't stand their (soccer's) politics".



Celebrating the trip of a lifetime with a cake supplied by a Starlight foundation volunteer



# Jack Byrne

World football attention is too often focused on glitz, glamour, egos and bank balances. In what is often a cold and clinical business our own *Ray Gatt* has uncovered one of the most heart-warming football-related stories to run in this magazine, about a little champion who is a superstar in his own right.

Jack Byrne is not unlike thousands of football-crazy teenagers across the country. With round ball at his feet he can usually be seen in the backyard or in the park imitating his favourite all-time player, Pele, or living out his dream of scoring the winning goal for the Socceroos in a World Cup final.

As a midfielder with the Killarney Districts under 14's, little Jack doesn't get on the scoresheet but, despite giving away size to most of his opponents, he is quite adept at setting up his team-mates to score the goals.

Living at Bateau Bay on the picturesque NSW central coast, he often tags along with his father Adrian, mother Kim and younger brothers Billy, 12, and Josh, 10, to watch the Newcastle Breakers in the Ericsson Cup national league.

On the surface, there is nothing special about this story. It's a typical scenario, acted day in and day out all around the country. But, there is a remarkable twist to this tale. It might well be a story of a trip of a lifetime. But, for the most part, it is a story about the bravery of a little boy and

his family, some much deserved luck, some help from a couple of corporate giants and the considerable lending hand of a wonderful organisation known as the Starlight Foundation.

Jack's story goes back two years when he was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour and underwent surgery followed by

a series of a debilitating radiation treatment. According to father Adrian, Jack is now in remission "and back to playing terrific soccer with his local club". While the radiation has affected his growth, the Byrne family have been counting their blessings seeing their son being able to lead a fairly normal life.



Jack, Josh and Billy gearing up for the Nigeria v Paraguay clash



The family neither sought nor expected anything else other than having their son back safe and sound following the delicate surgery and watching him make a recovery. So, you can imagine the disbelief and emotion when out of the blue, the family received a call from the Starlight Foundation, which had been informed of Jack's plight through the family counsellor.

The foundation is a remarkable organisation dedicated to raising money to help children with serious illnesses.

Adrian takes up the story:

"The foundation asked Jack if he had a wish, what would it be. Well, it took about six months to decide but, being a football family and with the World Cup coming up, there was only one decision," he explained.

"Actually, Jack's wish was to meet his hero Pele at the World Cup, but the foundation said that was two wishes. So he settled for the Cup.

"But, I don't know that the people at Starlight realised the magnitude of the World Cup, for they had a few problems, especially in trying to secure tickets for matches.

"Still, they were magnificent to us, especially Margie Stephen, a co-ordinator for the foundation. She is a fantastic lady."

Through the help of the Starlight Foundation the entire Byrne family packed their bags and headed for Spain and France for 28 days and the trip of which dreams are made.

Before leaving Sydney, they were handed a copy of Soccer Australia's World Cup magazine and Adrian says it was a fabulous source of entertainment and fun for the family.

"It was our soccer bible," Adrian wrote in a heart-warming letter to us.

"Everyone in the family read the magazine from the first page to the last."

Once in France, Jack got to see three games, including the final, though there were a few hiccups.

On hearing of the ticket problems, Mastercard, Coca-Cola, Snickers and Craig McLatchey, the secretary general of the

Australian Olympic Committee and a former Young Soccerroo, stepped in with prized tickets.

McLatchey takes up the story:

"Starlight got in touch with me as I was

"He is such a great kid and character and I was only too happy to help."

For his part, Jack described his venture as "cool".

"I loved it, especially the final...it was just the best," Jack told Soccer Australia.

Jack, whose favourite Australian player is Aurelio Vidmar, said he particularly enjoyed returning home and going to school at Mater Del College, where his father also teaches, to tell his friends all about his trip.

Adrian also had a tale to tell about the family experience on the night of the final.

"Jack was inside the ground but the rest of us made our way to the Hippodrome, a racetrack on the outskirts of Paris where they had a huge screen showing the match live," he said.

"It was an unbelievable atmosphere with flags, flares, horns, drums, colour and about 50,000 people. It was almost better than being in the Stade de France because all those things were banned.

"Anyway, after the game we tried to get back to the hotel to pick up Jack but all the transport had closed down. Kim, myself and the two boys eventually got a lift from a Frenchman, who decided to bypass the traffic jam by driving on the wrong side of the road.

"It was a little scary, but it was funny as well because there was a whole line of cars which decided to follow us. Anyway, we eventually got back to the hotel at about 3:30 in the morning.

"We weren't really worried because we knew Jack would be well looked after."

Indeed, McLatchey made sure of that as he looked after Jack at the hotel while celebrations went on.

While there, a group which runs the Asian Football League in Hong Kong took to Jack after hearing of his story and

showered him with gifts.

According to McLatchey, the upshot is that the AFL has promised to try to start a similar scheme to that run by the Starlight Foundation and help kids with serious illnesses.



going over for some holidays. One of the sponsors had let them down and I was fairly confident I could get Jack a ticket for the final.

"I'll never forget the final and the look of awe on Jack's face. It was a wonderful day.



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# RIZZO ON THE RISE



It's early days yet for Nick Rizzo, but the indications are that the teenager from Sydney has the potential to join Mark Bosnich, Stan Lazaridis and Harry Kewell as a certified star in the English Premiership. *Melina Boursinos* spoke to the young midfielder on the eve of his transfer from Liverpool to Crystal Palace.

He is faster than a speeding bullet, quicker than a moving train and it is only a matter of time before Australian Nick Rizzo is given the opportunity to prove that he has what it takes to play among England's football greats.

It is hard for the 18-year-old to believe that it was not so long ago he was sitting at home in Sydney contemplating his future. Two years on and his dream of playing professional football in one of the toughest leagues in the world has become a reality. Look out Harry Kewell, Rizzo is set to become the next Australian to make a name for himself in England.

From the moment he signed a professional contract with Liverpool, he has never looked back. He recalls those early days and describes moving to England as tough, but it is clear that his optimism and confidence have been the driving forces behind his success.





"Before I left, I was playing for the Sydney Olympic youth team. I got the best clips of me playing and I made a video and sent it to various clubs through an agent. I got responses from seven or eight clubs, including Manchester United, and I went for trials.

"I eventually signed with Liverpool when I was 17. Since then I've been on the bench six times and played in a friendly match against Glasgow Rangers. In the beginning

it was difficult to adjust to the way of life and the climate, but my mum is also living with me and I found it has helped a lot. Both my parents have sacrificed a lot for me and I really appreciate it."

Rizzo is not the first player to slip through our youth ranks unnoticed and he won't be the last. He took a chance, and although there are never any guarantees, he has placed himself in an ideal position to achieve his goals. He admits that working

with players of such prestige and talent, in particular Steve McManaman, Jamie Redknapp and Michael Owen, has greatly influenced his development.

"They make you look good, simply by the way they position themselves. They are always willing to offer you advice, and because they are so experienced and they know so much, you take it on board." Earlier this year Nick burst into the Olyroo line-up and created a storm, playing an integral role in all three matches against Brazil. It was clear when watching him play that his skill level, speed and ball control are exceptional. His performance was pure class, and if his aim was to be noticed there is no doubt it was achieved.

"It was an honour playing for Australia. It was great playing in front of my family and friends and many of them hadn't seen me play before. The crowd were fantastic and I'm really looking forward to the Sydney 2000 Games."

Olyroo team-mate and friend Vince Grella describes him as a very professional character with a great attitude and work ethic. "Nick is an easy-going guy who fits in well with the team. It is an accolade that he is playing for such a big club. He isn't the biggest player in physique, but he knows how to get the ball. I watch a lot of English football on TV and I can see him making a successful career."

Every year there are players who venture overseas to play professional football, only to return shortly after with bruised egos and shattered dreams. However, it seems Nick was ready for a challenge. He now eats and breathes football six days a week and loves every minute of it.

"I think that if you go overseas with the attitude that it's going to be difficult and you're not going to do well, then you won't succeed. When I went to England I always believed that I was going to make it and I'm still there."

Liverpool manager Roy Evans describes Rizzo as an "exciting" prospect. It may not be long before the gregarious young gun is on the field exciting Crystal Palace fans.





# Walking in their footsteps

Nick Rizzo may well become the next Australian to make an impact in the English Premiership - if Crystal Palace can win promotion this season. He'll be following in the footsteps of some of the best players this country has ever produced. Here's the full honour roll of Aussies who have appeared in England's top division.

## 1950s

### JOE MARSTON (*Preston North End*)

Marston was the first Australian to make an impact in the English first division. Played for Preston North End in the 1954 FA Cup final and his status as an Australian soccer legend is recognised by the annual awarding of the Marston medal for best on ground at the Ericsson Cup grand final.

## 1970s

### ADRIAN ALSTON (*Luton Town*)

Rejected a possible move to West Germany to join newly-promoted Luton immediately after the Socceroos' only finals appearance. Alston top scored for the Hatters in 1974/75, but after falling out with the Luton management was transferred to Cardiff City the following season.

### JOHN KOSMINA (*Arsenal*)

Kosmina played three UEFA Cup games for Arsenal in 1978/79, but made just one league appearance for the Gunners, in their opening fixture of the same season against Leeds. He returned to Australia soon after.

## 1980s

### CRAIG JOHNSTON (*Liverpool*)

Johnston was part of the relentless Liverpool machine which claimed trophy after trophy in the 1980s. His crowning achievements were playing in the Reds' 1984 European Cup-winning team and scoring for Liverpool against Everton in the 1986 FA Cup final.

### ALAN DAVIDSON (*Nottingham Forest*)

Davidson's classy defensive work for the Socceroos in the early 1980s had him earmarked for bigger and better things. When his chance came with Nottingham Forest, however, injuries limited his first-team appearances for Brian Clough's side. Davidson returned home and 14 years and several clubs later was still turning out for Melbourne Knights when required.

## 1990s

### MARK BOSNICH (*Aston Villa*)

A star of the 1991 World Youth Championship, Bosnich has won two winner's medals with Aston Villa - in the 1994 and 1996 League Cup finals. Occasionally lands himself in hot water - his Fawley Towers 'Nazi' salute and nearly beheading Jürgen Klinsmann spring to mind - but the flamboyant one-time Sydney United keeper is one of the pin-up players of the Premier League.

### ROBBIE SLATER (*Blackburn Rovers, West Ham & Southampton*)

After an excellent season with Blackburn Rovers in 1994/95, the Red Baron became the first (and so far only) Australian to claim a Premiership medal. Slater left Rovers to join West Ham before moving to Southampton, where his tireless efforts in midfield made him a favourite with Saints fans. He joined first division Wolverhampton Wanderers early this year.

### JASON KEARTON (*Everton*)

Understudy to the Everton's durable goalkeeper Neville Southall for several seasons. After a handful of senior games, Kearston joined Crewe Alexandra, where he is still going strong.

### JOHN FILAN (*Coventry & Blackburn*)

Another goalkeeping understudy who hasn't done a lot wrong during limited first-team opportunities. Reserve first to Steve Ogrizovic at Coventry and then Tim Flowers at Blackburn, Filan was desperately unlucky to break an arm in a 7-2 win against Sheffield Wednesday early last season, while Flowers was out injured. He is now fully recovered.

### ADEM PORIC (*Sheffield Wednesday*)

A member of the 1991 Young Socceroos squad which finished fourth in Portugal, Poric managed only a handful of appearances for Sheffield Wednesday despite several years on the club's books. Now playing for Notts County.

### STAN LAZARIDIS (*West Ham Utd*)

An established Premiership star after injury slowed his early momentum following a move from Adelaide Sharks. Has just completed his third season in England during which he scored one of the goals of the season, a 30-metre screamer against FA Cup finalist Newcastle United.

### MARK SCHWARZER (*Middlesbrough*)

Signed from Bradford City in 1997, the athletic former Marconi keeper has already played for Middlesbrough in two League Cup finals at Wembley. The blond custodian is regarded as crucial to Boro's attempts to stay in the Premier League in 1998/99 after promotion last season.

### KEVIN MUSCAT (*Crystal Palace*)

The tough-tackling Victorian began last season with newly-promoted Crystal Palace and acquitted himself well. He joined Wolverhampton Wanderers mid-campaign and helped his new club to an FA Cup semi-final appearance against Arsenal.

### CARL VEART (*Crystal Palace*)

Limited opportunities to make an impact in the Premier League after helping Palace to the top flight in 1996/97. The ex-Adelaide City forward joined second division Millwall early last season.

### HARRY KEWELL (*Leeds United*)

Virtually unknown at the start of last season, the fresh-faced Kewell finished 1997/98 as one of the hottest young prospects in English football. Leeds manager George Graham has made it clear that Kewell is central to his plans to restore the Yorkshire club to its former glory.

### SASA ILIC (*Charlton*)

The talented young goalkeeper's heroics ensured Charlton's success in last season's play-offs and he starts 1998/99 as the club's Premiership first-choice custodian.







# ASIAN HOPES

## With Home Sweet Home

France's stunning World Cup success in July served to underscore the value of home advantage on the world stage. The performances of Asian teams in the France '98 tournament was hugely disappointing and hopes for improvement in four years time will be critical to the success of the 2002 series in Japan and South Korea. *Phillip Micallef* looks at the problems facing Asia and Oceania after the France '98 flop.

Make no mistake, Asia's performance in France '98 was poor and hugely disappointing. It showed that there's a lot of work to be done before this part of the world can catch up with the superpowers from Europe and South America. A single victory from a dozen games does not augur well for the region as it prepares to hold the first World Cup of the next millenium in Japan and South Korea.

Iran and Japan were probably the best-performed teams. Iran, who beat Australia in a playoff for the right to play in France, performed reasonably well against Germany and Yugoslavia, losing narrowly on both occasions, and even managed to beat the United States 2-1 in Lyon for their first ever finals victory. Golden boy Medhi Mahdavia scored the winning goal seven minutes from time.

Japan can consider themselves unlucky to be returning home empty handed from their first journey into World Cup football when they could so easily have earned a draw from each of their games with Argentina, Croatia and Jamaica. The Japanese were particularly unlucky against

the Croats and fell to a late goal from Davor Suker, after creating and missing several chances.

Not for the first time, Japan were let down by poor finishing. Hidetoshi Nakata, Asia's footballer of the year, was the pick of the Japanese team and his industry and creativity in midfield did not go unnoticed. Nakata, 21, has since signed a contract with newly-promoted Italian Serie A club Perugia.

If the Iranians and Japanese can draw some consolation from France '98, South Korea and Saudi Arabia were an absolute disaster. The Koreans never got going in the tournament and were beaten 3-1 by Mexico, thrashed 5-0 by Holland and drew 1-1 with mediocre Belgium. Saudi Arabia were a shadow of the enterprising side that won so many friends at USA 94 and after losing 1-0 to Denmark, they lost their heads against France and were spanked 4-0 before they signed off with 2-2 draw with South Africa.

Japan, South Korea and Saudi Arabia caught the eye with their neat approach but had no player capable of finishing off



AUSTRALIA'S ONLY REGIONAL TEAM  
IN THE ERICSSON CUP COMPETITION

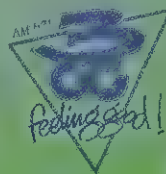


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Holland's Dennis Berka  
South Korea's Choi  
at France  
South Korea want down

promising moves. Both countries underlined their frustration by sacking respective coaches, Cha Bum Kun and Carlos Alberto Parreira, midway through their participation in the tournament. Japan's Takeshi Okada resigned soon after Japan's elimination became official.

Which brings us to the Australian angle. If the Socceroos failed to beat the fourth-best Asian team in the qualifiers, just where does our football stand? Bearing in mind that some players who formed the mainstay of our bid to reach France - not to mention coach Terry Venables - are now gone, Australia appears to have a bit of rebuilding to do in order to mount a serious challenge for 2002.

The scramble for places in 2002 will be nothing less than a dogfight, primarily because there might not be as many places allotted to the lesser confederations as there were in France. New FIFA president Sepp Blatter said quite clearly during his

election campaign leading up to the World Cup in France that Asia, Africa and Concacaf must justify their claims for places in the 2002 finals by performing on the field in 1998.

Mexico, Nigeria and Morocco justified their existence with strong performances -



the Mexicans and Nigerians reached the second round and the Moroccans were desperately unlucky not to do so - the USA, Jamaica, Cameroon, South Africa, Tunisia and the four Asians generally did not.

With pressure mounting from Europeans

to have more teams in the World Cup, it would be surprising if there are more than nine teams (four from Africa, two from Concacaf and three from Asia or Oceania) from the three regions joining hosts Japan and South Korea in 2002. Asia and Africa will fight to the death to retain their quota - plus the two co-hosts - but if they fail, Australia's path to the finals would become even harder.

If this scenario eventuates, the Socceroos probably would have to beat the third and not fourth team in Asia to reach 2002. Unless, of course, FIFA allows Australia to join the Asian countries in a full-scale qualification series. Asia has said it would welcome such a concept. "If Australia want to join us and FIFA retains its present quota of Asian teams - and there is absolutely no reason it should not - we will not oppose the idea," Asian Football Confederation general secretary Peter Velappan says.

**"If the Socceroos failed to beat the fourth-best Asian teams in the qualifiers, just where does our football stand?"**



## ASIA'S POOR PERFORMANCE IN FRANCE

The four Asian teams that qualified for France '98 went back home early and pretty disappointed with their overall results. Iran recorded Asia's only win when they beat the United States while Japan, South Korea and especially Saudi Arabia were a huge disappointment.

## THE ASIAN RESULTS IN FRANCE

### GROUP C

Saudi Arabia - Denmark 0-1

Saudi Arabia - France 0-4

Saudi Arabia - South Africa 2-2

### GROUP E

South Korea - Mexico 1-3

South Korea - Holland 0-5

South Korea - Belgium 1-1

### GROUP F

Iran - Yugoslavia 0-1

Iran - USA 2-1

Iran - Germany 0-2

### GROUP H

Japan - Argentina 0-1

Japan - Croatia 0-1

Japan - Jamaica 1-2

## ALEX TOBIN'S VERDICT ON THE ASIANS

Socceroo captain Alex Tobin has no doubts Japan and South Korea will be forces to be reckoned with in the 2002 World Cup on home soil.

"Both South Korea and Japan will have learnt from their experience in France and they can look forward to 2002 with confidence," Tobin says.

"The Japanese especially did enough in their first-ever World Cup to suggest they would do well again at home. There were moments when they looked very good but they were not as consistent as Argentina and Croatia. The Koreans, too, impressed with their physical condition and managed to create many chances against Mexico with a man short (after Ha Seok Ju was sent off



South Korea's  
Sang Chul Yoo in action

two minutes after scoring)."

Tobin says Iran and Saudi Arabia were a huge disappointment.

"The Iranians looked good in parts but were never able to put in a whole 90 minutes while the Saudis, after having achieved reasonable success in Asian football, were found wanting on a world stage," Tobin explained.

Tobin hopes Australia will have a better chance of reaching the 2002 finals if they are included in an Asian group instead of having to play an Asian side

on a one-off basis.

"Over 10 or 12 games one can afford slip-up because there is time to recover in a playoff there's no second chance," he says.



South Korea's Kim G.H.



# CARLTON SOCCER

1998-99 Membership Guide



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Japanese supporters also known as Ultra Nippon do the Mexican Wave

## THE DAY NORTH KOREA HUMBLING THE MIGHT OF ITALY

North Korea's stunning performance in the 1966 World Cup remains the highest point of Asian soccer.

The North Koreans were given little chance of surviving a tough group featuring the Soviet Union, Italy and Chile, but after losing their first match 3-0 to the slick Soviets, the Koreans raised a few eyebrows by grabbing a 1-1 draw with Chile in the next match.

However, nobody was quite prepared for what happened in their next match in Middlesbrough against the Azzurri, replete with world-class players and among the favourites for the title. The Koreans took the lead on the stroke of half-time with a good goal from Pak Doo Ik, who beat Enrico Albertosi with a low shot.

The Italians hit the Koreans with

everything they had in the second half but could not find a way past a resolute defence made up of six, seven and even eight men.

North Korea went on to win 1-0 to earn a place in the quarter-finals while the humiliated Italians caught an early plane home.

In the quarter-finals North Korea ran into a free-scoring Portuguese side and looked like causing another major sensation when they took a shock 3-0 lead after only 24 minutes. Portugal eventually steadied themselves and striker Eusebio helped himself to four goals in a 5-3 victory.

It is 32 years now since the Koreans lit up the north-east of England with their free-spirited displays.

No Asian team has yet emulated them.

## ASIA LOOKS FORWARD TO 2002

Asian Football Confederation general

secretary Peter Velappan says he was more than satisfied with the performance of the Asian teams in France '98.

"It is true that none of the four teams managed to reach the second round but overall the quality of our football was of a high standard," he says.

"We were encouraged by our teams' results and tactics, which were better than in 1994. I have written to the four respective associations and told them to keep their heads high. We have nothing to be ashamed of because we have played better football in France than ever before.

"Japan were our best performers and should have made the second round but they missed many chances, especially against Croatia. Even Iran did very well to lose only 2-0 to Germany and 1-0 to Yugoslavia and beat the United States.

"There has been talk of our quota being reduced in the next World Cup but we will accept that. We expect to have the same number of teams plus co-hosts South Korea and Japan in 2002.

"The World Cup belongs to all six confederations and I believe our quota is fair. Besides, the very reason the competition was expanded from 24 teams to 32 was to give teams from such areas as Concacaf, Asia, Africa and Oceania a better chance of performing at the game's highest level."



South Korea  
Jung Woo-seok  
dribbles  
past a defender



1998/99 Ericsson Cup

official **Guide**



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# Credits

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<b>Photography</b>	Sporting Pix
<b>Publisher</b>	Prime Advertising Developments

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**Footnote:** The Media Guide is re-printed in the October, 1998 edition of Soccer Australia magazine.





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# Messages



Sydney Football Stadium  
Driver Avenue, Paddington (PO Box 175) NSW 2021  
Phone 61 2 9380 6099 Fax 61 2 9380 6155

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DAVID WOOLLEY

WITH MORE TEAMS, more games, more fans and more media exposure, the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season promises to be the biggest in the history of the league.

The advent of Northern Spirit, located in North Sydney, will see fifteen teams compete around the country. Combine this with a competition of 30 rounds, and the fans will definitely have plenty of football to look forward to.

The season promises to be a cracker and Channel 7's involvement will be the perfect medium to take soccer followers around Australia through the season.

We are not only encouraged by the involvement of commercial television, but also with the current state of Australian soccer. In addition to the continuing success of our National teams and overseas-based Australians, we proudly acknowledge the talent and skill of the players that compete in the Ericsson Cup.

Enhancing the domestic league are the return of players of the calibre of Robbie Slater and Graham Arnold plus the growing influence of the Olyroo and Young Socceroo players in the Ericsson Cup.

I would like to thank Ericsson Australia, support sponsors, the players and clubs, staff and officials, whose support and commitment are instrumental to the continuing growth and success of the Ericsson Cup.

David Woolley  
Chief Executive  
Soccer Australia

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As sponsors of the Ericsson Cup we are delighted at how well the media has taken up the challenge of reporting and promoting this great game.

The reporters and photographers, the camera operators, the technicians, and directors who bring the world's most popular game to our air waves, screens and newspapers are a vitally important component of the game.

Soccer Australia has truly come of age and we at Ericsson Australia are proud and delighted to be part of this growing success.

We have now passed the half-way mark of our five year association with Soccer Australia and can report that our sponsorship has been an outstanding success.

We are one of the world's largest telecommunications suppliers with more than 100,000 employees in more than 130 countries. Wherever we are, soccer is played.

Ericsson entered into an agreement with Soccer Australia convinced that soccer was the vehicle to carry our international brand into the homes and hearts of millions of Australians who are increasingly becoming consumers of Ericsson products and services.

This linkage between our investment in soccer and our success in the marketplace is no accident. This bold national competition in a young emerging soccer nation can be judged by the number of players of international calibre that are emerging from the Ericsson Cup competition.

With the continued support of the media and the new commercialisation of soccer, I am confident that soccer is poised to gain increasing prominence in the Australian sporting calendar.

Ericsson Australia is proud to support Australian soccer and its growing role as a viable force in world soccer.

Kjell Sorme  
Managing Director  
Ericsson Australia

## Soccer Australia Contacts

Basil Scarsella	Deputy Chairman
David Woolley	Chief Executive
Raul Blanco	Olympic Coach & Assistant National Coach
Les Scheinflug	Joeys & Young Socceroos Coach
Corinne Blatter	International Events Manager
Anthony Clark	Marketing Services Co-ordinator
Stephen Copping	Media Manager
Jason Crowle	Media Promotions Co-ordinator
Matt Favier	High Performance Manager
Anter Isaac	Assistant Accountant
Peter Jackson	Finance and Administration Manager
Ann Nichols	International Transfers and Clearances
Gary Power	Director of Referees
Jim Selby	Coaching and Development Manager
Margaret Yates	Personal Assistant to Chief Executive

## Ericsson Cup Contacts

Stefan Kamasz	General Manager
Anthony Clark	Marketing Services Co-ordinator
Jason Crowle	Media Promotions Co-ordinator
Anter Isaac	Assistant Accountant
Despina Kalogiannis	Administration
Steve Manning	Administration

## Soccer Australia

Sydney Football Stadium, Driver Avenue,  
Paddington (PO Box 175), NSW 2021

Telephone: (02) 9380 6099

Facsimile: (02) 9380 6155





# Adelaide City



## CLUB COLOURS

Home: shirt/shorts/socks:

black&white/black/black

Away: shirt/shorts/socks:

dark green/black/black

Strip supplier: Kappa

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major Sponsor: Fairmont Homes

Other Sponsors: N/A

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Zoran Matic

Mobile: 0412 855 630

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Hindmarsh Stadium

Address: Holden Street, Hindmarsh

Telephone: (08)8346-1055

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 8,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car Parking: Holden Street (50 spots),

Manton Street (150 spots)

Nearest Train Station: Bowden Railway

Station, 10 minute walk from stadium

Train Station Telephone: (08)8217-4111

Nearest Taxi Rank: Milner Street, Hindmarsh

Taxi telephone: (08)8211-8888

Nearest Bus Stop: Manton Street

(outside stadium).

Buses telephone: (08)8287-4777

## MEDIA

Media box: 16 seats

General media seating: 16 seats

Phone lines: 6 lines.

Contact (08)8340 0688

Radio Commentary boxes: 1

Television Commentary boxes: 1

Car Parking: Yes, arranged on match day

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$8 - \$12

Children: \$2 - \$5 (2-12yo)

Concession: \$8 - \$11

## Team Line-Up

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## CLUB SHOP

Address: Hindmarsh Stadium

Opening Hours: Match days

Telephone: (08)8346 1055

# SOCCER

AUSTRALIA





## Player Profile - Alex Tobin

**Born:** 3-11-1965 in Melbourne **Height:** 1.90m **Weight:** 80kg  
**Signed From:** West Torrens Birkalla **Position:** Defender  
**Representative Honours:** SA, Australia U-20s, Senior Team (capt)

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1984-97/98	Adelaide City	376	24

EVER WONDERED WHAT it would be like to captain your club and country in every game you play? Stifling pressure, interspersed with probing questions from team-mates, club officials and those perennial pests, journalists. Then it's boots on and another star performance.

In the matchday program for Australia's World Cup clash with Iran Tobin was quoted as saying: "I honestly never ever thought that I would captain my country."

The Soccerroo and Adelaide City skipper leads his country by example, not unlike England's Alan Shearer.

However, the Newcastle United striker does not have the media skill of Tobin. In one of England's leading soccer monthlies, Match Of The Day, Shearer was described as having: "...the banal account of Rothschild...and the phrase blood out of a stone" could have been invented for him.

During the Soccerroos' 1997 World Cup qualifiers, Tobin became Australia's soccer spokesman.

Nothing seems to daunt the clean-cut 32 year old.

"Hopefully I don't come across as a rambling idiot."

When he's on the pitch, the love-affair

with the human race comes to an end. His steel-like resolve to win the ball - at all costs - leaves his opponents with respect and occasionally a parting gift.

Tobin pushes hard questions away about his future and past with the skill of an experienced Federal MP. What about his club and Soccerroo commitment?

"Being a full-time player, it's the way to go for me. My international future is uncertain. I was disappointed by the fact that there were so many 36-year-olds at France '98."

On the issue of the television deal Soccer Australia has secured for the 1998 World Cup, Tobin, who made his international debut in 1988, comments: "It's a wonderful bonus for the players. They (Channel 7) will show the players as being celebrities. It will give the spectators a chance to relate to the players on a personal level. The players will look forward to

### Championship Tip:

Adelaide City

### Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

## Club History

**PAST YEAR:** 5th

**YEARS IN NSL:**

1977 to 1998/99

NSL Champions -

1991/92 & 1993/94

Champions (South Div) -

1993

Runners up - 1992/93 &

1995

Cup Winners - 1979, 1989 & 1991/92

Cup runners up - 1978

Finalists - 1986, 1989/90,

1990/91, 1991/92, 1992/93,

1993/94, 1994/95, 1995/96,

1996/97 and 1997/98

### GAMES RECORD:

Sérgi Mèlta (445)

### GOALS RECORD:

Damian Mori (91)

### REC GLS IN SEAS:

Damian Mori (31) in 1995/96

### RECORD WIN:

10-3 v Mooroolbark

(League) in 1977

### RECORD DEFEAT: 0-6 v

St George (League) in 1988

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>V/Pres.</b> Charlie Capogreco	08 8336 9077	
<b>Secretary</b> Tony Antenucc	08 8336 9077	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Vince Cosmai	08 8336 9077	
<b>Development</b> Alex Tobin	08 8336 9077	
<b>Marketing</b> Kaye Dobnla	08 8336 9077	
<b>Media Off.</b> Max Huffa	08 8336 9077	
<b>Man/Coach</b> Zoran Matic	08 8346 1055	

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# Adelaide Sharks



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: blue & white/blue/blue

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/red

Strip supplier: N/A

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major Sponsor: N/A

Other Sponsors: N/A

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Andrew Stathopoulos

Work: 08 8351 9866

Mobile: 0412 319 694

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Ilias Tsakikis

Telephone: (08)8351-9866

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Hindmarsh Stadium

Address: Holden Street, Hindmarsh

Telephone: (08)8346-1055

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 8,000

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Disabled Toilets: Yes

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Television Commentary boxes: 1

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## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

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## Team Line-Up

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Children: \$2 - \$5 (2-12yo)

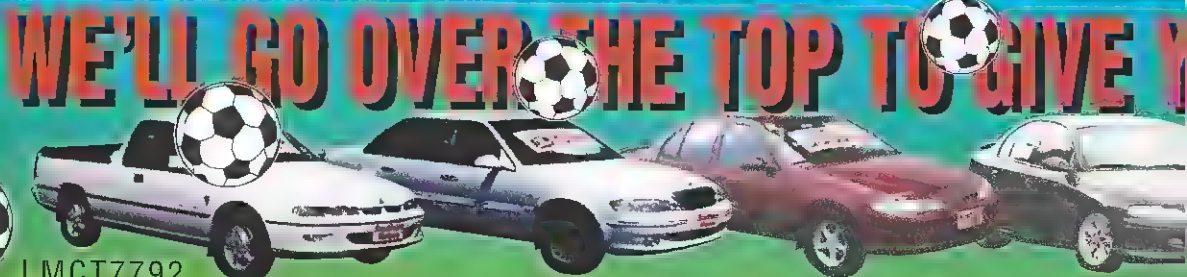
Concession: \$8 - \$11

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Hindmarsh Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (08)8346-1055





## Player Profile - John Gibson

**Born:** 10-2-1970 in Sydney, NSW **Height:** 1.74m **Weight:** 70kg  
**Signed From:** Adelaide City **Position:** Midfielder  
**Representative Honours:** NSW, Australia Schoolboys, U-20s, U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1994/95 - 97/98	Adelaide City	101	8
1992/93 - 93/94	Sydney United	53	11
1991/92	Apia-Leichhardt	23	8
1990/91	Sydney United	22	3
1989 - 89/90	Blacktown City	75	14

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO John Gibson? A few years ago he was being likened to 1986 World Cup winner Martin Peters.

Fittingly, it was Gibson's Sydney United coach, Manfred Schaefer, who made the comparison.

Peters - a goalscoring midfielder for West Ham, Tottenham, Norwich City and England - used to arrive late in the penalty box and score a vital goal or two. During the 1992/93 season, Gibson was earning plenty of plaudits due to his late runs and midfield goals. It was then that Schaefer made his Gibson-as-Martin Peters comment.

Schaefer and Gibson are back working together for the third time. Schaefer, the Sharks' new boss, also coached Gibson at Apia Leichhardt.

The former Marconi Fairfield mentor wants Gibson to create and score goals. "Manfred did ask me before I signed with Adelaide Sharks if I had forgotten how to score goals," says the son of South African parents. Chad, his younger brother, is with Marconi.

"I was becoming disgruntled at Adelaide

City and even though I've got no regrets with what I have done in my career, I would like to put myself back on the map. I expect to see a free-spirited Gibson, who had brief trials at English sides QPR and Tottenham in the mid-80s, in a more attacking role.

The Sharks' 1998 season in the National Soccer League sees Gibson lifting a top-six spot, adding, "Talk is cheap but we are quietly confident and Manfred has got the players in top condition. The Australian soccer stalwart is just 26 games away from playing his 300th in the Ericsson Cup. An achievement, barring injury, he should complete towards the end of the 1998/99 campaign.

Only 28, the diminutive midfielder could, in four or five seasons, pass the all-time Ericsson Cup record of games played. Serg Melia holds the record with 413 NSL appearances.

### Championship Tip:

Adelaide Sharks

### Star Player Tip:

Hamilton Thorp

## Club History

**LAST YEAR:** 10th

**YEARS IN NSL:**

19th - 1977 to 1986

1989/90, 1991/92 to

1998/99

**HONOURS:**

Champions - 1978

Cup runners up - 1981

and 1986

Finalists - 1978,

1992/93 and 1995/96

**GAMES RECORD:**

Graham Honeyman

(239)

**GOALS RECORD:**

Graham Honeyman (36)

**REC GKS IN SEAS:**

Jim Tsekiris (15) in

1995/96

**RECORD WIN:**

7-0 v Sunshine G. Cross

(League) in 1984

**RECORD DEFEAT:**

0-7 v Sydney City

(League) in 1980 and v

Wollongong City (League)

in 1989/90

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>President</b> John Garas	08 8276 1517	
<b>Secretary</b> Andrew Stathopoulos	08 8351 9866	
<b>Admin. Mgr.</b> Peter Korolis	08 8351 9866	
<b>Develop.</b> Richie A'agich	08 8340 9688	
<b>Media Off.</b> Andrew Stathopoulos	08 8351 9866	
<b>Man/Coach</b> Manfred Schaefer	08 8351 9866	

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# Brisbane Strikers



## CLUB COLOURS

Home: shirt/shorts/socks: Yellow/royal blue/yellow

Away: shirt/shorts/socks: Green/green/white

Strip supplier: Uhlsport

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Hyundai

Other sponsors: Castlemaine Perkins, Coca-Cola, Clem Jones Group, ABC Printing

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Morris McGiffin

Mobile: 0411 152 520

Work: (07)3252-5327

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Suncorp Stadium

Address: Castlemaine Street, Milton

Telephone: (07)3876-6511

Capacity: 40,000

Seating Capacity: 25,500

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 240 spaces, cost \$5

Nearest train station: Milton Station, 5 minute walk from stadium

Nearest taxi rank: Castlemaine Street

Taxi telephone: (07)13-1924

Nearest bus stop: Castlemaine Street (outside stadium).

## MEDIA

Media box: 15 seats

General media seating: 26 seats

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (07)7826-6511

Radio Commentary boxes: 7

Television Commentary Boxes: 2

Car parking: 3 spaces

## Team Line-Up

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## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12

Children: \$4 (U-16)

Concession: \$6

Family: \$25

Junior Striker: \$2



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## Player Profile - Kasey Wehrman

**Born:** 16-8-1977 in Cloncurry, Queensland **Height:** 1.80m

**Weight:** 75kg **Signed From:** Ipswich Knights

**Position:** Right Midfield **Representative Honours:** QLD, Australia U-20s, U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Strikers	29	4

MIDDLESBROUGH WAS WAITING to take him to England for a trial and the Young Socceroos were ready to participate in the 1997 World Youth Championship in Malaysia.

Ericsson Cup's 1996/97 Under-21 Player of the Year was on the verge of making the big time.

Then, in the Young Socceroos' final friendly game, Brisbane Strikers' Kasey Wehrman broke his ankle.

Sixteen months later Wehrman is back playing for Australia and predicting a Strikers revival.

The ankle still requires physiotherapy four times a day but gone are the screws and the anguish of a cast that he was forced to wear for eight weeks.

"The injury was my first major drawback and even now I do not know when it will be 100 per cent right," Wehrman says.

His lengthy spell on the sidelines injured, however, were not filled with doubt about him continuing his soccer career.

"I was always confident that I would play again for Brisbane and the Olyroos.

It was not a possibility that I would not get back in the team. All I want to do is help restore pride in the Brisbane jersey and remain in the Olyroo squad."

At Suncorp Stadium this season, the

Strikers will be guided by John Kosmina who follows in the footsteps of an Australian striker, Frank Farina, as team boss.

"Maybe Frank took Brisbane as far as he could. Kosmina's like Frank. He knows when to draw the line. If you're not performing it doesn't matter if you are 13 or 31 - he will drop you."

The skilful Wehrman likes nothing better than to take on two or three players, but last August's South American tour with the Olyroos taught the right-sided playmaker a thing or two about professional football.

"I learnt to concentrate a lot more during the game and not to give the ball away. Holding onto the ball, even under pressure, is a trademark of the South American game."

Kasey is fully aware that Suncorp Stadium must become a fortress, a place where teams fear coming to.

"We must play with more heart this season."

### Championship Tip:

Brisbane Strikers

### Star Player Tip:

Paul Trimboli

## Club History

### LAST YEAR 12th YEARS IN NSL

8th - 1991/92 to  
1998/99

### HONOURS

Champions - 1996/97  
Finalists - 1995/96 and  
1996/97

### GAMES RECORD

Troy Cranney (152)

### GOALS RECORD

Rod Brown (41)

### REC GLS IN SEAS

Frank Farina (20) in  
1995/96

### RECORD WIN

7-1 v Adelaide City  
(League) in 1995/96

### RECORD DEFEAT

0-7 v Adelaide City  
(League) in 1995/96

## Club Contacts

### Work Tel. Mobile

**Chairman** Ian Brusasco, AM 07 3252 5327

**Director** Frank Speare 07 3252 5327

**Gen. Mgr.** Ray Evans 07 3252 5327

**Develop.** Andrew Harper 07 3252 5327

**Mktg.** Derryn Humphries 07 3252 5327

**Media Off.** Morris McGiffin 07 3252 5327

**Man/Coach** John Kosmina 07 3252 5327



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# Carlton S.C.



## CLUB COLOURS

Home: shirt/shorts/socks: Navy blue/white/navy blue  
Away: shirt/shorts/socks: white/navy blue/white  
Strip supplier: Nike

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major Sponsor: Parmalat  
Other Sponsors: Coffex, Nike

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Jerome Lyford  
Mobile: 0418 328 880  
Work: (03)9389-6213

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Sam Prenesti  
Telephone: (03)9642-3966

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Optus Oval  
Address: Royal Parade, Parkville  
Telephone: (03)9387-1400  
Capacity: 20,000  
Seating Capacity: 20,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes  
Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car Parking: 2,000 spaces, cost \$4  
Nearest Train Station: Royal Park, 4 minutes walk from stadium  
Nearest Tram Station: Tram No.18/19/20 (outside stadium)  
Nearest Taxi Rank: Sydney Road, Parkville  
Taxi telephone: (03)13-1008  
Nearest Bus Stop: Royal Parade (outside stadium).

## MEDIA

Media box: Yes, 30 seats  
General media seating: as required  
Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (03)9387-1400.

Radio Commentary boxes: 6  
Television Commentary boxes: 3  
Car Parking: Yes (as per public)

**ADMISSION PRICES** (subject to change)  
Adult: \$14

## Team Line-Up

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Children: \$6 (8-16yo)  
Concession: \$6

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Optus Oval  
Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 11am - 5pm  
Telephone: (03)9389-6288

# Don't pay the penalties!





## Player Profile - Vince Grella

**Born:** 5-10-1979 in Dandenong **Height:** 1.83m **Weight:** 76kg  
**Signed From:** Canberra Cosmos **Position:** Central midfielder  
**Representative Honours:** VIC, Australia U-20s, U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1997/98	Carlton SC	22	1
1996/97	Canberra Cosmos	14	1

THEY MAY HAVE missed out on lucrative soccer careers but Pasquale and David Grella should not underestimate the influence they have had on Australia's latest wonderkid.

Vince Grella - a key member of the Young Socceroo and Olyroo teams - is thankful his two older brothers have guided him clear of the murky waters that threaten a young star's pursuit of full-time football.

"They both warned me," confesses the 19-year-old midfielder.

"If the advice had come from someone else then I wouldn't have listened - they showed me the way. It was the little things they said that made the difference.

"Pasquale was a good player but he fractured his patella and put on 10kg and became a bit of a party boy."

Watching his brothers miss the boat has made Vince - christened Vincenzo by his Italian-born parents - determined to grab every chance that came his way.

During a patchy 97/98 campaign - a knee injury kept him out of Carlton's Grand Final loss to South Melbourne - saw the ex-Canberra midfielder play in various roles for debut coach Eddie Krncevic.

"I couldn't say anything to Eddie because I had no runs on the board."

Grella could form a formidable partnership with new Carlton signing Andrew Marth. The ex-Melbourne Knights hardman is a two-time Ericsson Cup champion and a former Socceroo.

Many argue that top-flight Australian selection should come sooner rather than later and would prove to be the final litmus test for a player who has a collection of overseas clubs monitoring his form.

Watching Grella play you get the impression that he's styled his game on Brazilian World Cup skipper Dunga.

"I am comfortable in the middle of the park. I like the midfield anchor role."

A wise head on young shoulders?

"I am a good listener and I watch a lot of football - I learn from others' mistakes. That's one of my strengths."

So what would Grella, who has had the fortune to learn from his brothers' mistakes, offer young players seeking his advice?

"Enjoy what you do and be patient."

### Championship Tip:

Sydney Olympic

### Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

## Club History

### PAST YEAR:

and  
**YEARS IN NSL:**

and - 1997/98 to  
 1998/99

### HONOURS:

runners up - 1997/98  
 finalists - 1997/98

### GAMES RECORD:

Dean Anastasiadis and  
 Andy Vlahos (30)

### GOALS RECORD:

Andy Vlahos (13)

### REC GLS IN SEAS:

Andy Vlahos (13) in  
 1997/98

### RECORD WIN:

5-0 v South Melbourne  
 (League) in 1997/98

### RECORD DEFEAT:

1-3 v Wollongong City  
 (League) in 1997/98

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b> Jack Reilly	03 9389 6213	
<b>Secretary</b> Lou Sticca	03 9389 6213	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Lou Sticca	03 9389 6213	
<b>Mktg.</b> Jerome Lyford	03 9389 6213	
<b>Develop. Off.</b> Jeff Olver	03 9389 6213	
<b>Media Off.</b> Angelo Sticca	03 9389 6213	
<b>Man/Coach</b> Eddie Krncevic	03 9389 6213	

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# Canberra Cosmos



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/red

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Yellow/blue/blue

Strip supplier: Admiral

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Novell

Other sponsors: Total Care

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

contact club

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Peter Kunz

Telephone: (02)6209-3066

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Bruce Stadium

Address: Batty Street, Canberra

Telephone: (02)6253-2111

Capacity: under renovations, contact club

Seating Capacity: under renovations,

contact club

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: adjacent to stadium

Nearest taxi rank: outside stadium

Taxi telephone: 13-2227

Nearest bus stop: outside stadium

Buses telephone: (02)6203-3600

## MEDIA

Media box: contact club

General media seating: contact club

Phone lines: contact club

Radio Commentary boxes: contact club

Television Commentary Boxes: contact club

Car parking: contact club

## ADMISSION PRICES (Subject to change)

Adult: \$10

## Team Line-Up

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Children: \$2 (Under-12)

Concession: \$5

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Bruce Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02)6281-7981

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## Player Profile : Ivan Zelic

**Born:** 12-2-1978 in Canberra **Height:** 1.91m **Weight:** 88kg  
**Signed From:** Sydney Olympic **Position:** Central Midfield  
**Representative Honours:** Australia U-20s, U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1997/98	Canberra Cosmos	15	2
1995/96 - 96/97	Sydney Olympic	23	-

COACHES RON SMITH, David Ratchliffe, David Mitchell, Branko Culina, Rale Rasic, Les Scheinflug and Raul Bianco all have one thing in common: They have all coached Ivan Zelic.

Zelic praised them all, but then focused on Smith, soccer's former head coach at the Australian Institute of Sport.

"He's the best ever. Any position he could rant and rave about. He could talk underwater."

Veteran Cosmos coach Rasic also gets the thumbs-up from Zelic, who says:

"He's the main reason I am still at Canberra."

Zelic's versatility - he appears for the Olyroos as a defender and then slots into the central midfield role for the nation's capital team - has given Zelic a new lease of life.

An injury-plagued career has made the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season a "make or break" campaign for the Canberra skipper.

"People have not seen the best of me...or Canberra."

"I have been preaching the Cosmos bible to a lot of the Olyroo players this year. I am quietly confident we will cause some upsets this season."

He admits that as a 17-year-old making

his Ericsson Cup debut for Sydney Olympic he was overawed. Expectations because of his surname didn't help. Then three confidence-crushing injuries all caused by team-mates.

"My expectations this season are high. Playing for Canberra will be a challenge and I have set myself a target of being the best player in the league. I want to see how far I can push myself."

He's just as confident about the support Canberra can obtain if they can win games on a regular basis.

"If we could get in the top five, I'll guarantee you 12,000 fans would turn out and watch us play at home. Canberra people only watch winning teams."

Zelic rates Paul Trimboli as his most difficult opponent and is amazed when I do not mention Ned, his famous, globe-trotting Staccato brother, now in Germany with 1860 Munich.

"By the way, thanks for not mentioning my brother," Ivan says at the end of the interview.

Has Ivan finally escaped his brother's shadow?

### Championship Tip:

South Melbourne

### Star Player Tip:

Simon Colosimo

## Club History

### ST YEAR:

th

### ARS IN NSL:

- 1995/96 to

98/99

### VOURS:

### GAMES RECORD:

Paul Dee (73)

### GOALS RECORD:

Paul Wade and Peter Buljan (12)

### REC GLS IN SEAS:

Paul Wade (11) in 1995/96

### RECORD WIN:

8-1 v Sydney Olympic (League) in 1997/98

### RECORD DEFEAT:

0-8 v Wollongong City (League) in 1997/98

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b>		
Ian Knop	02 9258 2393	
<b>Deputy Chairman</b>		
Steve Doszpot	02 6282 8777	
<b>Gen. Manager</b>		
Denis Giavinic	02 6281 7981	
<b>Man/Coach</b>		
Rale Rasic	02 6281 7981	





# Gippsland Falcons



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Royal blue/royal blue/white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/white

Strip supplier: Covo Sports

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: Mobil GPG,

Ten Victoria, 3GG

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Damian Tripodi

Mobile: 019 423 115

After Hours: (03)5174-8742

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: c/- Gippsland Falcons

Telephone: (03)5134-5529

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Falcons Park

Address: Crinigan Road, Morwell

Telephone: (03)5134-5529

Capacity: 12,000

Seating Capacity: 8,500

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,000 spaces at no cost

Nearest train station: Morwell Railway

Station, 30 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (03)5133-7555

Nearest taxi rank: Morwell CBD

Taxi telephone: (03)5134-4772

Nearest bus stop: Crinigan Road (outside stadium).

Buses telephone: (03)5134-2055

## MEDIA

Media box: 12 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (03)5134-5529

Radio Commentary boxes: 1

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$10

## Team Line-Up

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Children: \$3 (5-16yo)

Concession: \$6

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Falcons Park

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (03)5134-5529



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## Mini

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## Player Profile - Archie Thompson

**Born:** 23-10-1978 in New Zealand **Height:** 1.71m **Weight:** 68kg  
**Signed From:** Bathurst **Position:** Midfield/forward  
**Representative Honours:** Australia U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1996/97	Gippsland Falcons	29	6

ARCHIE THOMPSON IS anything but your average soccer player. When he was first signed by the Gippsland Falcons, journalists were left fumbling for his phone number when he was first contacted. He was a star on the U-23 side last year.

"I didn't want to go down to this level," states Thompson.

Soccer pundits will point to one-time Falcons boss Frank Arok and Raul Blanco as the two coaches responsible for the attacking midfielder's path to soccer fame.

Arok gave Thompson his Ericsson Cup profile and Olyro coach Blanco saw the potential after a handful of games in Australia's premier soccer competition.

"Having the New Zealand born Australian is desperate for first-team football at Gippsland."

New Zealand-born Archie Thompson, the talented goal-getter a place in the first team.

Thompson, who was a star at his former club, a Glasgow Rangers player for eight successful years, wants a fired-up Thompson. The Falcons scored a paltry 28 goals last season.

"I just want a fair run," says Thompson.

"In the last two years I have had a lot of opportunities to play in the first team by coming on as a substitute. I feel I should have been given more."

"I will be a regular."

Thompson, who is 1.71m tall, is a forward in behind the front two strikers, is aware that parts of his game need working on.

A fan of the Diego Maradona dribbling school, the ex-Twin City Wanderers right-footer has been told to play more "one-touch" football by Blanco.

Blanco has issued a "track back" clause in Thompson's demands for a "one-touch" game.

"I am not used to defending but that's a part of the game I must learn," he says.

The wear-weary Gippsland-based 20-year-old was linked to a number of Ericsson Cup teams in the past, but he has decided to stay at the Falcons.

"There's more high-profile clubs but I'm happy to stay here. They are encouraging me for the last two years and I owe them a bit of loyalty."

### Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

### Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

## Club History

**PAST YEAR:** 11th  
**PLACES IN NSL:**  
 1992-93 to 1998-99  
**HONOURS:**  
 1994-95  
**PLACES RECORD:**  
 113

### GOALS RECORD:

John Markovski (20)

### REC. GLS IN SEAS:

John Markovski (11 in 1993/94)

### RECORD WIN:

5-1 v Brisbane (League) in 1994/95 and

v Newcastle Breakers in 1997/98

### RECORD DEFEAT:

0-5 v Canberra Cosmos (League) in 1995/96 and v Adelaide City (League) in 1995/96

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>President</b> Fred Di Sipio	03 5134 5529	
<b>Secretary</b> Paul Burns	03 5177 2020	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Mark Brady	03 5134 5529	
<b>Exc. Assist.</b> Lynnette Mullen	03 5134 5529	
<b>Sponsorship</b> Mike Answerth	03 5134 5529	
<b>Media Off.</b> Damien Tripodi	03 5174 7355	
<b>Man/Coach</b> Stuart Munro	03 5134 5529	

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- IMS competition matchball
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- excellent for ladies and junior matches
- high gloss surface with soft feel
- balanced backing system for shape & light control



### Ultima

- exclusive replica & practice quality ball
- PU coated high gloss synthetic material with "matchball" feel
- 4 ply polyester/ cotton backing for strength & performance
- mid rebound replica with real ball performance



### Cosmic

- training & junior matchball quality
- tough and durable synthetic surface with "matchball" feel
- 4 ply polyester/ cotton backing for strength & performance
- suitable for natural





# Marconi Fairfield



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Sky blue/sky blue/white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: White/white/green

Strip supplier: Asics

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Brescia Furniture

Other sponsors: 2WS

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Ross Musso

Mobile: 0411 624 242

Work: (02)9823-2222

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Frank Arruzza

Telephone: (02)9823-2222

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Marconi Stadium

Address: Marconi Plaza, Bossley Park

Telephone: (02)9823-7209

Capacity: 12,500

Seating Capacity: 6,032

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 2,500 spaces at no cost

Nearest train station: Fairfield Station  
(transport required to/from station)

Nearest taxi rank: Club Marconi

Taxi telephone: (02)13-1017 or  
(02)13-2788

Nearest bus stop: Prairievale Road

Buses telephone: (02)9890-0000

## MEDIA

Media box: 15 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact  
(02)9823-2222

Radio Commentary boxes: 2

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12

Children: \$3.50 (12-16yo)

Concession: \$7.50

## Team Line-Up

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## CLUB SHOP

Address: Club Marconi

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 1pm - 10pm,  
Sat/Sun 3pm - 12am

Telephone: (02)9823-2222



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## Player Profile - Dominic Longo

**Born:** 23-8-1970 in Hobart **Height:** 1.84m **Weight:** 84kg  
**Signed From:** KSV Cercle Brugge (Belgium) **Position:** Defender  
**Representative Honours:** NSW, Australia U-17s, U-20s, U-23s, Senior Team

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Marconi Fairfield	64	2
1991/92	Newcastle Breakers	20	-
1990/91	St George	12	1
1989/90	Blacktown City	14	1

DOMINIC LONGO IS not as big as he should be. Going through the edited highlights of Australia's greatest soccer accomplishments in the last six years, Longo's name is best remembered as one of the Barcelona heroes during the Sydney's fourth placing at the 1992 Olympic Games.

After the Games, Longo, then 21, headed for Belgium and Cercle Brugge. His career was ready to take off. Or so it seemed.

Six years later, with a handful of Australian "A" caps to his name and a place in the Marconi first team, 28-year-old Longo says he has "no regrets".

The affable defender is not bitter about his Soccer Australia exile and his overseas departure.

"Different coaches have different ideas. But after the '92 Olympics I did think I would get a better run in the Socceroo team."

Now, the part-time university student is pumped up for Marconi's bid for a championship trophy. Longo talks effusively about Frank Farina, Marconi's ex-striker and one-time Socceroo star.

"You've got to be a million things to be a modern coach, that's why he's going to be good," says Longo.

"Frank's got a lot of ideas, different methods and he knows there is always another way to make players train - he's smart."

Something tells you that the Tasmanian born Marconi star will not be a soccer journeyman, tying his boot laces in his late 30s and then joining the coaching ranks.

"I'd like to play for another five years. A player knows when his used-by-date is up," says Longo.

The hard man image is not something Longo feels is justified. The 1996/97 season saw Longo notch seven yellow and two red cards. Last season he improved suspended for just two matches.

"Nowadays you can't go over the top. Like you could 10 years ago and get away with it. I hope I'm respected for being a hard player and a fair one."

### Championship Tip:

Marconi Fairfield.

### Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

## Club History

RECORDS	RECORDS	RECORDS
23rd - 1977 to 1998/99	and 1996/97	Top 4 Cup runners up - 1978
HONOURS:		
1995/96	1992/93, 1993/94, 1995/96	1980
and 1995/96	Tommy McCulloch (246)	(League) in 1990/91

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b> Frank Baroni	02 9823 2222	
<b>President</b> Tony Labbozzetta	02 9823 2222	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Frank Labbozzetta	02 9823 2222	
<b>Mktg.</b> Ross Musso	02 9823 2222	
<b>Admin.</b> Gabriella Genovese	02 9823 2222	
<b>Develop.</b> Brendan Renaud	02 9823 2222	
<b>Media Off.</b> Ross Musso	02 9823 2222	
<b>Man/Coach</b> Frank Farina	02 9823 2222	



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# Melbourne Knights



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/white/blue

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Gold/gold/gold

Strip supplier: Covo Sports

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Prime Life Corporation

Other sponsors: CSR, JZ Lee, Tooheys,

Pacific Textiles, Covo Sports

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Peter Brettell

Mobile: 0418 339 836

Work: (03)9699-4188

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Tom Babic

Telephone: (03)9312-3584

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Knights Stadium

Address: Lot 2, Somers St, North Sunshine

Telephone: (03)9312-3584

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 4,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,200 spaces, cost \$3

Nearest train station: Sunshine and Ginifer Stations

Train station telephone: (03)9619-5405/(03)9610-8567

Nearest taxi rank: at above train stations

Taxi telephone: (03)9689-1194

Nearest bus stop: Northumberland Road, McIntyre Road

Buses telephone: (03)9311-3407

## MEDIA

Media box: Yes, 10 seats

General media seating: Yes, as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact 0418 381 626.

Radio Commentary boxes: 2

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12 Children: \$3 (12-16yo),

## Team Line-Up

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Under-12 free Concession: \$6

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Knights Stadium

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm and match days

Telephone: (03)9312-3584

Australia's most successful team of the 90's are proudly supported by:  
Primelife Corporation, Toohey's, CSR, Emoleum, Indospray, JZ Lee, Pacific Textiles, Covo Sports

Raceplay the sporting company leaders in: Public Relations Marketing





## Player Profile - Zeljko Susa

**Born:** 13-7-1978 in Canberra **Height:** 1.86m **Weight:** 85kg  
**Signed From:** Australian Institute of Sport **Position:** Left midfield  
**Representative Honours:** ACT, Australia U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1997/98	Melbourne Knights	17	2

**WHO CAN FORGIVE** Melbourne Knights' Zeljko Susa for having a phobia about changing rooms?

Before he was a well-known Australian international, Susa was having a trial with Ericsson Cup side Wollongong Wolves. In the changing rooms after the match, the Olyroo ace was getting changed when, literally, his world caved in around him.

Somehow the walls fell apart and the debris landed on the then-teenager. It was only days later that he was forced to undergo a total knee reconstruction.

The ex-Australian Institute of Sport graduate was out for 12 long months. "It only makes me more determined to achieve success."

The left-sided midfielder, now 20, lists participation at the 2000 Olympic Games with Raul Blanco's Olyroos as his ambition during the next two-years.

"Raul has told me to go forward...and aim for 10 to 12 goals this season." The young Knights star adds firmly, "I've got to push forward more."

Susa predicts a top-four spot for his club.

"Last season we had a lot of youth players in the first-team. The buzz

around Melbourne Knights now is because those youngsters have the talent to make an impression in the league."

Susa, a keen fisherman, has also cast his eye on an overseas career. "I like the look of the German League. They play to my style: ball at the feet...making on players."

Asked when he would like to hit the professional ranks, he says: "It depends how this season goes."

Zeljko is determined not to let peer pressure get in the way of a promising year for the Knights and Australia. A party boy image is not a tag that will sit comfortably with the exciting wideman.

"It's hard at first to say no (to going out and having a few drinks) but you realise it's worth staying in and preparing for the next game."

Collapsing walls have enabled Susa to have a pragmatic outlook on the game. "It's scary how quickly things can change."

### Championship Tip:

Melbourne Knights

### Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

## Club History

**LAST YEAR:** 7th

**YEARS IN NSL:**

6th - 1984 to 1998/99

**HONOURS:**

Champions - 1994/95 and 1995/96

Runners up - 1990/91,

1991/92 and 1993/94

Minor premiers - 1990/91,

1991/92, 1993/94 and

1994/95

Cup winners - 1994/95

Cup runners up - 1984

Finalists - 1984, 1985,

1989, 1989/90, 1990/91,

1991/92, 1993/94,

1994/95, 1995/96 and

1996/97

**GAMES RECORD:**

Josip Biskic (282)

**GOALS RECORD:**

Ivan Kelic (55)

**REC GLS IN SLAS:**

Mark Viduka (18) in 1994/95

**RECORD WIN:**

8-1 v Wollongong Mac

(League) in 1990/91

**RECORD DEFEAT:**

0-6 v Adelaide City (League)

in 1990/91

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b>		
David Galbally QC	03 9608 7222	
<b>Gen. Manager</b>		
Tania De Marchi	03 9312 3584	
<b>Marketing</b>		
Peter Brettell	03 9699 4188	
<b>Media Off.</b>		
Peter Brettell	03 9699 4188	
<b>Man/Coach</b>		
Vid Horvat	03 9312 3584	

Player Management are proud to be associated with the Melbourne Knights.

Contact: Account Executive  
 Peter Brettell (03) 9699 4188





1998/1999

# Ericsson Cup Fixture



# 1998/1999 Ericsson Cup Fixture

1998/99 DRAW	Adelaide City	Adelaide Sharks	Brisbane Strikers	Canberra Cosmos	Carlton SC	Gippsland Falcons	Marconi Fairfield	Melbourne Knights	Newcastle Breakers	Northern Spirit	Perth Glory	South Melbourne	Sydney Olympic	Sydney United	Wollongong Wolves	Bye
Adelaide City		Rd 27	Rd 7	Rd 9	Rd 2	Rd 11	Rd 29	Rd 20	Rd 13	Rd 23	Rd 16	Rd 25	Rd 15	Rd 19	Rd 4	Rd 5
Adelaide Sharks	Rd 12		Rd 14	Rd 1	Rd 18	Rd 3	Rd 6		Rd 22	Rd 28	Rd 8	Rd 17	Rd 24	Rd 30	Rd 26	Rd 21
Brisbane Strikers	Rd 24	Rd 29		Rd 11	Rd 21	Rd 13	Rd 16	Rd 5	Rd 15	Rd 8	Rd 20	Rd 27	Rd 2	Rd 25	Rd 6	Rd 9
Canberra Cosmos	Rd 18	Rd 16	Rd 26		Rd 6	Rd 15	Rd 20	Rd 24	Rd 2	Rd 25	Rd 22	Rd 29	Rd 4	Rd 12	Rd 8	Rd 13
Carlton SC	Rd 17	Rd 9	Rd 4	Rd 23		Rd 19	Rd 11	Rd 30	Rd 25	Rd 20	Rd 13	Rd 7	Rd 27	Rd 5	Rd 16	Rd 29
Gippsland Falcons	Rd 26	Rd 20	Rd 28	Rd 30	Rd 8		Rd 22	Rd 18	Rd 4	Rd 12	Rd 24	Rd 1	Rd 6	Rd 14	Rd 10	Rd 17
Marconi Fairfield	Rd 14	Rd 23	Rd 1	Rd 3	Rd 26	Rd 5		Rd 12	Rd 7	Rd 15	Rd 10	Rd 21	Rd 18	Rd 17	Rd 28	Rd 19
Melbourne Knights	Rd 3	Rd 25	Rd 22	Rd 7	Rd 15	Rd 9	Rd 27		Rd 11	Rd 4	Rd 29	Rd 19	Rd 13	Rd 23	Rd 17	Rd 1
Newcastle Breakers	Rd 28	Rd 5	Rd 30	Rd 17	Rd 10	Rd 21	Rd 24	Rd 26		Rd 14	Rd 18	Rd 3	Rd 8	Rd 1	Rd 12	Rd 23
Northern Spirit	Rd 6	Rd 13	Rd 19	Rd 10	Rd 3	Rd 27	Rd 30	Rd 21	Rd 29		Rd 2	Rd 11	Rd 16	Rd 9	Rd 22	Rd 7
Perth Glory	Rd 1	Rd 19	Rd 3	Rd 5	Rd 28	Rd 7	Rd 25	Rd 14	Rd 9	Rd 17		Rd 23	Rd 11	Rd 21	Rd 30	Rd 27
South Melbourne	Rd 10	Rd 2	Rd 12	Rd 14	Rd 24	Rd 16	Rd 4	Rd 8	Rd 20	Rd 26	Rd 6		Rd 22	Rd 28	Rd 18	Rd 30
Sydney Olympic	Rd 30	Rd 7	Rd 17	Rd 21	Rd 12	Rd 23	Rd 9	Rd 28	Rd 19	Rd 1	Rd 26	Rd 5		Rd 3	Rd 14	Rd 25
Sydney United	Rd 8	Rd 15	Rd 10	Rd 27	Rd 22	Rd 29	Rd 2	Rd 6	Rd 16	Rd 18	Rd 4	Rd 13	Rd 20		Rd 24	Rd 11
Wollongong Wolves	Rd 21	Rd 11	Rd 23	Rd 19	Rd 1	Rd 25	Rd 13	Rd 2	Rd 27	Rd 5	Rd 15	Rd 9	Rd 29	Rd 7		Rd 3
Bye	Rd 22	Rd 4	Rd 18	Rd 28	Rd 14	Rd 2	Rd 8	Rd 16	Rd 6	Rd 24	Rd 12	Rd 15	Rd 10	Rd 26	Rd 20	

\*read down for home teams, across for away teams" \*\* season commences w/ending 12 October, 1998 and concludes w/ending 25 April, 1999"

FOR WEEKLY FIXTURE DATES CALL THE ERICSSON CUP HOT-LINE ON 1900 123 035





# Newcastle Breakers



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Blue/blue/blue

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Yellow/purple/yellow

Strip supplier:

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: NBN Television

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Shane Johnson

Mobile: 0412 512 722

Work: (02)4951-2722

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Name: Greg Jones

Telephone: 0418 271 856

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Breakers Stadium

Address: 104 Sandgate Road,

Birmingham Gardens

Telephone: (02)4951-2722

Capacity: 11,000

Seating Capacity: 2,666

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 400 spaces, cost \$3

Nearest train station: Sandgate Station,  
15 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)4962-9696

Nearest taxi rank: Nelson Street, Wallsend

Taxi telephone: (02)4979-3000

Nearest bus stop: England Street,  
Birmingham Gardens

Buses telephone: (02)4961-8933

## MEDIA

Media box: 10 seats

General media seating: 8 seats

Phone lines: One. Contact 0412 512 722

Radio Commentary boxes: 2

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: 12 spots

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12 - \$14

Children: \$6 (16-18yo)

Concession: \$6

## Team Line-Up

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Grandstand: add \$2

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Breakers Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02) 4951 2722

Last Season  
The FA Premier League  
Enjoyed a Weekly Television  
Audience of 450 Million.

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## Player Profile - Bradley Swancott

**Born:** 23-7-1979 in Newcastle, NSW **Height:** 1.80m **Weight:** 70kg  
**Signed From:** Juniors **Position:** Goalkeeper  
**Representative Honours:** NNSW, Australia U-20s, U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1996/97 - 97/98	Newcastle Breakers	20	-

WHEN ASKED WHY he chose a life between the sticks, Newcastle's only international figure leaves you doubting nothing.

He may have played a limited number of games in the Ericsson Cup but Bradley Kaveny Swancott, or 'Swanie' to his team mates, has plenty of confidence.

Says Bradley: "I would rather be pointing the finger than chasing other players around the park.

"I suppose I am confident for my age but a goalie has to be vocal."

The easy-to-quote Newcastle torn custodian learnt early on, to give away too much to the prying media. It only his second interview. Swancott was misquoted.

"It happened in the local papers. Something I said was taken out of proportion," Swancott adds. "You have to draw a line with the media. A lot of what goes on between the players is kept in the shed."

Introduced to Ericsson Cup soccer fans by former Breakers boss John Kosmina, Swancott has also had the bonus of having international coaching advice from veterans Les Scrimgeour and Raul Blanco. Newcastle has now

employed the highly-rated Lee Sterrey. Vying for the number 1 jersey will be Bob Cathin. Their goalkeeping coach will be Steve Dorman, who trained Socceroo Zeljko Kalac at Sydney United.

With these changes, the 5,000 loyal supporters who go through the turnstiles at Breakers Stadium will be looking for a much-improved National Soccer League campaign. Can they recapture their past glories?

"We are still a young side and none of the squad are locals. But that is a solid foundation.

"I know I've got to improve on all aspects of my game. Every time we lose a game that means I train twice as hard."

The shot-stopper talks of settling down and before I can put a question to him, claims: "I rarely go out and I am very focused - nothing gets in my way."

So is Swancott the clean-cut, wholesome, eloquent young man he is trying to portray?

"If that's what you're going to write, then I'm not going to stop you," Swancott laughs.

### Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

### Star Player Tip:

Vince Grella

## Club History

**LAST YEAR:** 13th  
**YEARS IN NSL:**  
 7th - 1991/92 to  
 1993/94 and 1995/96  
 to 1998/99  
**HONOURS:**  
 Cup runners up -  
 1995/96

**GAMES RECORD:**  
 Ralph Maier (106)  
**GOALS RECORD:**  
 Warren Spink (29)  
**REC GLS IN SEAS:**  
 Warren Spink (16)  
 in 1992/93

**RECORD WIN:**  
 7-1 v Nth NSW Lions  
 (Cup) in 1996/97  
**RECORD DEFEAT:**  
 0-6 v Melbourne Knights  
 (League) in 1991/92

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b> Bill Collins	02 4951 2722	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Peter Clough	02 4951 2722	
<b>Admin.</b> Helen Delforce	02 4951 2722	
<b>Develop.</b> Lee Sterrey	02 4951 2722	
<b>Mktg.</b> Peter Clough	02 4951 2722	
<b>Media Off.</b> Shane Johnson	02 4951 2722	
<b>Man/Coach</b> Lee Sterrey	02 4951 2722	

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# Northern Spirit



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: white/white/white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: blue/blue/blue

Strip supplier: Reusch

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: North Shore Furniture,

Scuderia Volvo, Goodyear, Reusch

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: David Mason

Work: (02)9959-3010

Mobile: 0418 243 195

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: c/- Northern Spirit

Telephone: (02)9460-2187

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: North Sydney Oval

Address: Miller Street, North Sydney

Telephone: (02)9936-8585

Capacity: 20,000

Seating Capacity: 5,570

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: Ridge Street, 150 space,  
cost \$5

Nearest train station: North Sydney Station,  
15 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)9379-4112

Nearest taxi rank: McLaren Street,  
North Sydney

Taxi telephone: (02)13 2522

Nearest bus stop: Miller Street  
(outside stadium)

Buses telephone: (02)13 1500

## MEDIA

Media box: 2 boxes, 8 seats in each

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required.

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$10 - \$18

Children: \$5 - \$10 (12-16yo)

## Team Line-Up

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Concession: nil

## CLUB SHOP

Address: North Sydney Oval

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02)9460-2187

**spirit**  
f.c.

**Proudly  
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**reusch**





## Player Profile - Robbie Slater

**Born:** 22-11-1964 in Ormskirk, England **Height:** 5' 11" **Weight:** 80kg **Signed From:** Wolverhampton (England) **Position:** Central Midfield **Representative Honours:** Australian Senior Team

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1987-89	Sydney United	73	17
1986	Blacktown	19	2
1982-85	St George	98	27

ROBBIE SLATER WANTS to be a coach. When the talented ex-Blackburn Rovers, West Ham United, Southampton and Wolverhampton Wanderers midfielder appeared on Foxtel's English Premiership program, he confessed to wanting to prolong his soccer career by becoming a manager of team affairs. Sitting in the Sydney Pay-TV studio with him was Slater's new boss, Graham Arnold. The possible success of Liverpool's joint managers, Gerard Houllier and Roy Evans, was the topic and Slater uttered: "If it does work out, it could be good for me - maybe I will be a coach with Arnie (Graham Arnold)." Arnold, as quick as a striker in the six-yard box, replied: "Don't go too far." Arnold and Slater return to the National Soccer League thanks to debut Ericsson Cup outfit Northern Spirit. The Sydney-based club is hoping to repeat the success of Perth Glory, which attracts 15,000-plus crowds on home soil. Team-mates in the late '80s at Sydney United and partners during some of the Socceroos' more glamorous attempts at World Cup qualification in the '90s, Arnold and Slater could become the new force in Australian soccer.

Stated Slater: "This is the only club I would have come back for and I suppose Arnie played a big part."

Arnold said: "Some of us have done well out of the game and if we can't put something back into the game, then that would be a great shame."

Slater adds: "In the future the younger players at Northern Spirit will be looked upon as pioneers for Australian soccer. The game needs professional players in Australia."

The squad assembled at Spirit needs little introduction. Packed with players who have already proved themselves at Ericsson Cup level, shaped by players who have done the business overseas, Slater, 33, is equally zealous about the set-up at Spirit. "It's like a European club - it's well run. All the players are looked after." Robbie Slater even talks like a coach.

### Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

### Star Player Tip:

Gabriel Menendez

## Club History

### LAST YEAR:

Not applicable

### YEARS IN NSL:

1st - 1998/99

### HONOURS:

Not applicable

### GAMES RECORD:

Not applicable

### GOALS RECORD:

Not applicable

### REC CLS IN SEAS:

Not applicable

### RECORD WIN:

Not applicable

### RECORD DEFEAT:

Not applicable

## Club Contacts

### Work Tel. Mobile

<b>President</b> Kathryn Greiner	02 9265 9701
<b>Chairman</b> Rerno Nogarotto	02 9360 9055
<b>Dep. Chairman</b> Emmanue Zammit	02 9899 6242
<b>Oper. Mgr.</b> Melissa Down	02 9460 2187
<b>Mktg.</b> Gary Pearce	02 9460 2187
<b>Media Off.</b> David Mason	02 9959 3010
<b>Man/Coach</b> Graham Arnold	02 9460 2187



*we deliver style*





# Perth Glory



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks:

Purple/purple/purple

Away shirt/shorts/socks: black/black/black

Strip supplier: Umbro

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Western QBE

Other sponsors: Chicken Treat, Quit, Harvey Fresh, Coca-Cola, 96FM, Peters and Brownes, Driftwood Wines, The Swan Brewery, Tip Top, Mazda, Ansett Australia, Bank West, The West Australian

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Roger Lefort

Mobile: 0417 394 785

Work: (08)9383-9911

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Perth Oval

Address: Pier Street, East Perth

Capacity: 18,000

Seating Capacity: 9,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 400 spaces

Nearest train station: Claisebrook Station, 10 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone:

Nearest taxi rank: Pier Street (outside stadium)

Taxi telephone: (03)5134-4772

Nearest bus stop: Lord Street (outside stadium)

## MEDIA

Media box: 22 seats

(reserved in advance)

General media seating: no

Phone lines: Contact (08)9383-9911

Radio Commentary boxes: nil

Television Commentary Boxes: nil

Car parking: Yes, as required

## Team Line-Up

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## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12 - \$15

Children: \$4 (8-16yo)

Concession: \$8

## CLUB SHOP

Telephone: (08)9383-9911

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## Ultimax

- FIFA Approved professional quality matchball
- exclusive soft touch micro fibre material
- dual layer low tac PU surface with low water absorption
- maximum resilience for high power and accurate shooting
- exclusive matchball of The FA Premier League, Team England, The Football Association, Scotland, The Nationwide Football League, The Scottish Football League, The Football Association of Wales, The Irish Football League and many top International teams and clubs



## Mini

- exclusive - hand stitched replica ball





## Player Profile - Danny Milosevic

**Born:** 26-6-1978 in Carlton, Victoria **Height:** 1.89m **Weight:** 87kg  
**Signed From:** Arminia Bielefeld (Germany) **Position:** Goalkeeper  
 Midfield **Representative Honours:** Australia U-20s, U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 96/97	Canberra Cosmos	14	0

EVER SINCE MARK BOSNICH made the big time in English football, there has been an army of Australian goalkeepers wanting to emulate the Soccerco No 1. Perth Glory's Danny Milosevic is no exception.

The Mickey-taking 20-year-old returns to the Ericsson Cup after an eventful year in Germany.

"We keepers, have had the greatest role models. Bosnich, Mark Schwarzer and Zeljko Kalac have all carved out great careers," says the man who makes the goalmouth his domain.

"My year overseas was a blessing in disguise. It didn't work out perfectly but all the drama makes you stronger - I will be a lot wiser the next time I play abroad."

His two-year contract with Perth has a clause allowing him to transfer to a European club.

Milosevic believes one of the reasons why few Australians have not made the big time in Germany is due to the language barrier.

"If you don't speak German you are just screaming for the ball at training and being quiet during the trips away with the team," says the Olyroo gloveman. However, you will hear no complaints from Milosevic that he did not make a

first-team appearance for Arminia Bielefeld.

"After the World Youth Championships (Malaysia, 1997) I never thought I would go and play in one of the top leagues in Europe," Milosevic made 12 substitute appearances for Bielefeld.

He is quick to point out that he did not join the West Australian-based club because of all the frequent-flyer points he will accumulate over the coming season.

"I have been really impressed with the training we have done in the off-season. Having coaches of the calibre of Bernd Stange and Mich D'Avay means all the players are learning the latest training methods."

When it comes to the vexed question of a finals spot in this season's Ericsson Cup, Milosevic is confident. "If we get a good start then I do not see any reason why we can't finish in the top two."

### Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

### Star Player Tip:

Sinisa Colosimo

## Club History

### LAST YEAR: 8th

### YEARS IN NSL:

3rd - 1996/97 to 1998/99

### HONOURS:

Nil

### GAMES RECORD:

Scott Miller (51)

### GOALS RECORD:

Bobby Despotovski (22)

### REC GLS IN SEAS:

Bobby Despotovski (14) in 1996/97

### RECORD WIN:

6-0 v Canberra Cosmos (League) in 1996/97

### RECORD DEFEAT:

1-4 v Sydney Olympic (League) v Canberra Cosmos (League) in 1996/97 and v Adelaide City (League) in 1997/98

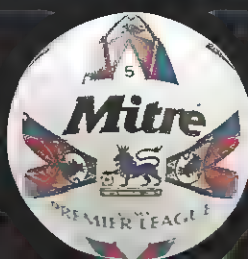
## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b> Nick Tana	08 9383 9911	
<b>Dep. Chairman</b> Paul Afkos	08 9383 9911	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Roger Lefort	08 9383 9911	
<b>Mktg.</b> Jeff Dennis	08 9383 9911	
<b>Media Off.</b> Roger Lefort	08 9383 9911	
<b>Develop.</b> Mich D'Avay	08 9383 9911	
<b>Coach</b> Bernd Stange	08 9383 9911	



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- tough and durable synthetic surface with "matchball" feel
- 4 ply polyester/ cotton backing for strength & performance
- suitable for natural surfaces and astroturf





# South Melbourne



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Royal blue/royal blue/royal blue & white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: White/white/blue & white

Strip supplier: Puma

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Vivianes Collection

Other sponsors: Parthenon Marble, Southern Motors

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Peter Filopoulos

Mobile: 0412 558 881

After Hours: (03)9645 9797

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Helen Dimitrileakis

Telephone: (03)9645-9797

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Bob Jane Stadium

Address: 25 Albert Road Drive, Sth Melb

Telephone: (03)9645-9797

Capacity: 18,000

Seating Capacity: 3,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,000 spaces, cost \$4

Nearest tram station: Albert Road Drive, outside stadium

Train station telephone: (03)9619-2300

Nearest taxi rank: South Melbourne CBD

Taxi telephone: (03)13 1755

## MEDIA

Media box: 25 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (03)9645-9797

Radio Commentary boxes: 3

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$15

Children: \$3 (12-16yo), Under-12 free

Concession: \$8

## Team Line-Up

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## CLUB SHOP

Address: Champion Sports Bar, Bob Jane Stadium

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm and match days

Telephone: (03)9645-9797



# WE'LL GO OVER THE TOP TO GIVE YOU







## Player Profile - Con Blatsis

**Born:** 6-7-1977 in Melbourne **Height:** 1.92m **Weight:** 86kg  
**Signed From:** Australian Institute of Sport **Position:** Centre-back  
**Representative Honours:** VIC, Australia U-20s, U-23s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	South Melbourne	65	4

CON BLATSI'S TRADEMARK is to play with such simplicity that mistakes are no longer a part of his game. You will not see the South Melbourne defender dancing around opposition forwards or zig-zagging his way past a packed midfield.

The part-time golf player enjoys nothing better than blocking out strikers and winning soccer matches for club and country.

The Olyroo stopper has pin pointed the world's most expensive defender, Manchester United's \$24 million PSV Eindhoven capture, Jaap Stam, as the game's consummate professional.

"I am always looking to improve my game and watching Stam in the World Cup for Holland was an inspiration," comments Blatsis.

Olyroo coach Rauli Blanco is an admirer of the Australian Institute of Sport graduate.

"In a very short time he has taken some big steps," says Blanco, adding: "He's always willing to learn and listen and they are the ingredients you are looking for in a player."

The humble defender, who names ex-Sydney United striker Ante Milcic as his most difficult opponent, says success as a soccer player was never guaranteed.

"It was not a walk in the park to play for South Melbourne or Australia," says Blatsis.

"I had to work very hard on my game - even now I spend hours on my own, concentrating on my weak points. "As a junior player I was not skilful but Bill Damianos and I are the only ones who went on to play in the Ericsson Cup. You never know who's going to make the grade when you are kicking a ball around at school."

South Melbourne will go into this season's National Soccer League as favourites and Blatsis admits they will be difficult to beat.

The 2000 Olympic Games hopeful wants to taste success again.

"Winning the Grand Final last year was the best feeling in my career. I can't explain how I felt, but looking back now, I realise that it was huge. It was an absolutely fantastic night. It was like a dream."

### Championship Tip:

South Melbourne

### Star Player Tip:

Paul Trimboli

## Club History

**LAST YEAR:** 1st  
**YEARS IN NSL:**  
 3rd - 1977 to 1998/99  
**HONOURS:**  
 champions - 1984, 1990/91  
 and 1997/98  
 champions (South Div) -  
 1984  
 runners up - 1981  
 minor premiers - 1992/93  
 and 1997/98

Minor premiers (South Div) -  
 1984 and 1985  
 Cup winners - 1989/90 and  
 1995/96  
 Cup runners up - 1987  
 Finalists - 1978, 1980, 1984,  
 1985, 1988, 1989/90,  
 1990/91, 1991/92, 1992/93,  
 1993/94, 1994/95, 1996/97  
 and 1997/98

### GAMES RECORD:

Steve Blair (338)  
**GOALS RECORD:**  
 Paul Trimboli (89)  
**REC GLS IN SEAS:**  
 Doug Brown (22) in 1984  
**RECORD WIN:**  
 7-0 v Newcastle Rosebud  
 (League) in 1984  
**RECORD DEFEAT:**  
 0-7 v Marconi (Final) in  
 1992/93

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>President</b> George Vasilopoulos	03 9370 8552	
<b>Secretary</b> Nick Sagiakos	03 9645 9797	0412 36 8358
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Peter Filopoulos	03 9645 9797	0412 558 881
<b>Develop Off.</b> Angie Postecoglou	03 9645 9797	
<b>Mktg.</b>		
<b>Media Off.</b> Jim Stiliadis	03 9820 8999	0419 557 950
<b>Man/Coach</b> Angie Postecoglou	03 9645 9797	

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# Sydney Olympic



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks:

Away shirt/shorts/socks:

Strip supplier: Lotto

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: Secom, Thai Airlines,  
Lombardy, UTS

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: David Cooper

Work: (02) 9558 5355

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Belmore Sports Ground

Address: Leylands Parade, Belmore

Telephone: (02)9789-2922

Capacity: 22,000

Seating Capacity: 7,500

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 2,000 adjacent to ground,  
cost \$2

Nearest train station: Belmore Station, 5  
minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)9759-1701

Nearest taxi rank: Belmore Station

Taxi telephone: (02)13-1451

Nearest bus stop: Belmore Station

## MEDIA

Media box: 20 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact  
Telstra/Optus

Radio Commentary boxes: 5

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, contact club

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$14

## Team Line-Up

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Children: \$5 (Under-12 free)

Concession: \$9

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Belmore Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02)9558-5355

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HOME SECURITY





## Player Profile - Adem Poric

**Born:** 22-4-1973 Kensington in London, England **Height:** 5'10"  
**Weight:** 82kg **Signed From:** Notts County (England) **Position:** Midfield **Representative Honours:** NSW, Australia U-20s

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
19989/90 - 90/91	St George	11	1

ADEM PORIC IS described in the UK's authoritative Footballers Factfile as a "stocky midfielder...showing himself to be fully committed, especially in the tackle."

For those of us who missed out on Adem Poric's 990 minutes of action at the turn of decade that introduction will have to do.

The forgotten man of Australian soccer quit St George (coached by Frank Arok, now at Olympic as technical director) and was signed by the then-Sheffield Wednesday manager, Trevor Francis.

Seven-years later, Poric is back playing summer soccer with cash-driven Sydney Olympic.

I took a drive out to Poric's abode, a small unit in Belmore. He has no wheels due to a car crash but Poric is happy to talk about football.

"When I left Australia I was earning \$70 to \$80 per week. I remember thinking how rich I was," says the ex-Australian Under-20 representative.

Poric, during the 1997/98 season, had a stint with Notts County who gained promotion to the English Second Division. He also had a spell with Southend under former Liverpool star Ronnie Whelan.

At Sheffield Wednesday, London-born Poric managed only a total of thirty appearances for the Yorkshire club.

Poric played under Francis, Ron Atkinson and David Pleat. He returned to Australia in June, 1998.

Brisbane Strikers coach Frank Farina, before he went to Marconi Fairfield, was the favourite to sign the out-of-contract player.

"Frank was overseas when I returned to Australia and I ended up talking to Branko Culina. The list of players he was signing impressed me."

Poric's sense of humour is endless. What would he be if he wasn't a professional footballer? Unemployed! When quizzed if there's one question he has never been asked by a journalist he retorts: "Yeah, would you like \$50 for your time?"

Without asking, he then recounts times spent on team buses with former roommate at Wednesday, Steve Nichol. Unfortunately, for libel reasons, those stories remain the property of Mr Poric. Suffice to say, Mr Nichol likes to drink...and sing...and sing...and sing.

### Championship Tip:

Sydney Olympic

### Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

## Club History

**LAST YEAR:** 9th

**YEARS IN NSL:**

22nd - 1977 to 1979 and 1981 to 1998/99

**HONOURS:**

Champions - 1989/90

Champions (North Div) - 1984 and 1986

Runners up - 1984, 1986 and 1989

Cup winners 1983 and 1985

Cup runners up 1989 and 1989/90

Finalists - 1984, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1989/90, 1991/92, 1993/94 and 1995/96

**GAMES RECORD:**

Gary Meier (296)

**GOALS RECORD:**

Marshall Soper (45)

**REC GLS IN SEAS:**

Kris Trajanovski (19) in 1995/96

**RECORD WIN:**

6-0 v Apia Leichhardt (Cup) in 1986

**RECORD DEFEAT:**

1-8 v Canberra Cosmos (League) in 1997/98

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>President</b> Nick Politis	02 9331 5000	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Frank Martin	02 9558 5355	
<b>Develop. Off.</b> Peter Tsekenis	02 9558 5355	
<b>Mktg.</b> Tony Rallis	02 9558 5355	
<b>Media Off.</b> David Cooper	02 9558 5355	
<b>Man/Coach</b> Branko Culina	02 9558 5355	

# SECOM HOME SECURITY

## FREECALL 1800 248 208





# Sydney United



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/white/blue  
Away shirt/shorts/socks: black/black/black  
Strip supplier: Puma

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A  
Other sponsors: McGrath Holden, BBX

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Rozzanna Bozabaljian  
Mobile: 0412 500 015  
Work: (02)9823-6413

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Parramatta Stadium  
Address: O'Connell Street, Parramatta  
Telephone: (02)9683-5755  
Capacity: 30,000  
Seating Capacity: 16,000  
Wheelchair Access: Yes  
Disabled Toilets: Yes

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: Parramatta Swimming Centre,  
O'Connell Street, 200 spaces at no cost  
Nearest train station: Parramatta Station,  
20 minute walk from stadium  
Train station telephone: (02)9848-9249  
Nearest taxi rank: Parramatta Station  
Taxi telephone: (02)13-1017  
Nearest bus stop: Church Street, Victoria Rd  
Buses telephone: (02)9683-2877

## MEDIA

Media box: no  
General media seating: 18 seats  
Phone lines: installed as required. Contact  
Telstra.  
Radio Commentary boxes: 4  
Television Commentary Boxes: 2  
Car parking: contact club

**ADMISSION PRICES** (subject to change)

## Team Line-Up

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contact club

## CLUB SHOP

Address: Parramatta Stadium  
Opening hours: Match days  
Telephone: (02)9823-6413

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The FA Premier League  
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Audience of 450 Million.

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## Player Profile - Nathan Day

**Born:** 25-11-1973 in Elizabeth, South Australia **Height:** 6' 1"

**Weight:** 80kg **Signed From:** Adelaide Sharks

**Position:** Midfield/forward

**Representative Honours:** Sth Aust.

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Adelaide Sharks	67	9

THE INFLUENCE DAVID MITCHELL has about to have on Sydney United's attacking midfielder Nathan Day, will be worth watching.

Mitchell, who has traveled the globe as a professional soccer player, was the key figure in Day leaving his home town for the 1996/97 Grand Finalist.

"Dave's got experience, a title, a good reputation and influence," says one of the quickest players in the Ericsson Cup.

"Before I actually signed for United, I had been talking to Dave (Mitchell) for two or three months."

For a fast speed and skill, Day is said to break double figures in the Ericsson Cup all time scoring chart. Mitchell remained stunner in the Dutch and English leagues, wants the ex-shin-kicker to score well in week ends.

Says Day, "That was mentioned and I hopefully with a good bunch of players around me I can hit my game and score more goals."

Coached at an early level by Rocky Alist, the father of Australian representatives Russ and John, the towering 6'1" all action Day is desperate for the season to commence.

"I want to play in a Grand Final and

having completed against a lot of the United team. I know how good they are."

His new next-door neighbour, Mlle Sterjovics, has had a busy off-season with the Gyrocs. Does Day still dream of playing for his country?

"I know I must be more consistent over the 3 Gyrocs. Sure why not. Living and playing in Sydney will give me more publicity and turning out for a side capable of winning the Championship must help."

Former Sharks coach Raul Blanco, now at the helm of the Australian team, is aware of Day, who started his career at a town rivals Adelaide City.

Tagged on quite well with Raul Espinoza last season and the men, once more, are of consistency. Hopefully he'll remember me for a better thing than this season."

However, club coach Mitchell, after all these, have influence. Mitchell was part of the Gyrocs coaching staff earlier this year.

### Championship Tip:

Sydney United

### Star Player Tip:

Corey Arden

## Club History

### PAST YEAR:

1998/99  
Champions - 1984 to 1998/99

### HONOURS:

Champions up - 1988 and 1996/97  
Minor premiers - 1996/97  
Minor premiers (North D.V) - 1986

Cup winners - 1987

Cup runner up - 1993/94

Finalists - 1985, 1986,

1987, 1988, 1993/94,

1994/95, 1995/96,

1996/97 and 1997/98

### GAMES RECORD:

Manis Lamond (239)

### GOALS RECORD:

Granam Arnold (67)

### REC GLS IN SEAS:

David Zarlic (21) in

1996/97

### RECORD WIN:

7-0 v Collingwood (League, in 1996/97)

### RECORD DEFEAT:

1-7 v Sydney City (Cup) in 1980

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b> John Hewson	02 9321 2104	
<b>President</b> Robert Krslovic	02 9725 5833	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b>		
Rozanna Bozabalain	02 9823 6418	
<b>Project Mgr.</b> Ante Grabovac	02 9823 6418	
<b>Development</b>		
Michael Santalao	02 9823 6418	
<b>Media Off.</b>		
Rozanna Bozabalain	02 9823 6418	
<b>Man/Coach</b> David Mitchell	02 9823 6418	

Quality of the Football



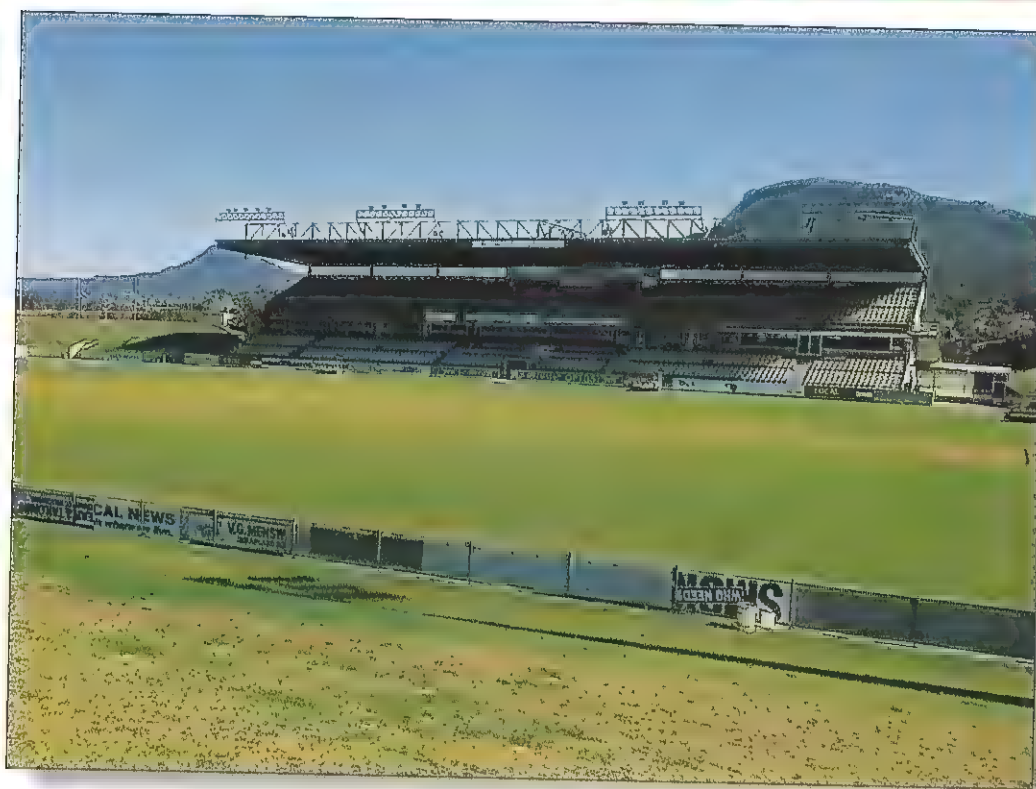
**Mitre**







# Wollongong Wolves



## CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/red

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Blue/blue/white

Strip supplier: Lotto

## SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: BHP

Other sponsors: Fraternity Club

## MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Michael Brooks

Mobile: 0412 340 129

Work: (02)4226-3988

## SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Tony Reynolds

Telephone: 018 422 481

## STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Brandon Park

Address: Squires Way, Fairymeadow

Telephone: (02)4226-3988

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 3,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: No

## TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,500, cost \$2

Nearest train station: Fairymeadow Station,  
5 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)4223-5582

Nearest taxi rank: Fairymeadow/North  
Wollongong

Taxi telephone: (02)4229-9311

Nearest bus stop: Fairymeadow/North  
Wollongong

## MEDIA

Media box: 10 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact  
(02)4226-3988

Radio Commentary boxes: nil

Television Commentary Boxes: one

Car parking: Yes, as required

## ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$11 - \$15

Children: \$4 - \$6 (7-11yo)

Concession: \$9 - \$11

## Team Line-Up

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## CLUB SHOP

Address: Brandon Park

Opening hours: Mon, Wed-Fri 9:30am-5pm  
and match days

Telephone: (02)4226-3988

# Do you feel the hunger?





## Player Profile - Alvin Ceccoli

**Born:** 5-8-1974 in Sydney, NSW **Height:** 1.80m **Weight:** 80kg  
**Signed From:** Sydney Olympic **Position:** Left wing-back  
**Representative Honours:** nil

### Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Wollongong Wolves	67	11

IF ALVIN CECCOLI never scores another goal in his career, then the one he put past arch-rivals Marconi in last season's Ericsson Cup play-offs will be just as important as championship medals or international appearances the flying wing-back might rack up in the next few years.

The underrated 24-year-old's stunning left-foot strike was one of the goals of the season.

"We were 2-0 down and at that stage of the game nothing was happening for us," enthuses Ceccoli.

"I picked up the ball in my own half and after a one-two I saw that Tony (Perenich) was man-marked in the box. I hit it sweetly."

The Wolves' 1997/98 Player of the Season - whose performances just behind goal-poacher Scott Chipperfield were seldom less than superb - is just as modest about his club's prospects in the 15-team National Soccer League.

How good are Wollongong? What's the coach like? Have you a chance of lifting the Ericsson Cup?

"We are becoming a good side...We've got a winning coach... We're getting there." Ceccoli's responses are short and sweet, a bit like the game he puts together

for his growing admirers at Brandon Park.

The former Sydney Olympic defender, who spent three years with the club without making a first-team appearance, also wants a regular spot in the international set-up.

Rumours were rife that he was likely to gain selection for the mainly home-based Soccerroo squad participating in the 1998 Optus World Series.

"I was disappointed. I had heard a couple of whispers so I got my hopes up a bit."

Ceccoli has moved to Fairy Meadow. He will no longer spend two-and-a-half-hours a day traveling to Wollongong for training and home games.

"It will give me more time for training. I am a full-time soccer player and I want to give it everything I've got," says Ceccoli.

"I don't want to look back and say 'I wish I'd done this, I wish I'd done that.'"

Something tells you that the Wollongong regular could be providing the ammunition for his club and country this season.

### Championship Tip:

Wollongong Wolves

### Star Player Tip:

Matthew Horsely

## Club History

**HIGHEST YEAR:** 4th  
**YEARS IN NSL:**

1981 to 1986,  
 1988 to 1998/99

### HONOURS:

Minor premiers - 1988  
 Finalists - 1982, 1988,  
 1991/92, 1992/93 and  
 1997/98

### GAMES RECORD:

Matt Horsley (191)

### GOALS RECORD:

Pat Brodnik (34)

### REC GLS IN SEAS:

Phil O'Connor (18) in  
 1982

### RECORD WIN:

8-0 v Canberra Cosmos

(League) in 1997/98

### RECORD DEFEAT:

0-6 v Preston (League) in  
 1980, v Marconi  
 (League) in 1989, v St  
 George (League) in  
 1989/90 and v South  
 Melbourne (League) in  
 1995/96

## Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
<b>Chairman</b> Doug Symes	02 4226 3988	
<b>Gen. Mgr.</b> Graeme Haney	02 4226 3988	
<b>Admin.</b> Susan Chiarelo	02 4226 3988	
<b>Development</b> Matt Horsley	02 4226 3988	
<b>Mktg.</b> Michael Brooks	02 4226 3988	
<b>Media Off.</b> Juliet Scanne	02 4226 3988	
<b>Man/Coach</b>		
Nick Theodorakopou os	02 9281 2288	

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## 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Ladder

TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
South Melbourne	26	13	9	4	56	41	48
Carlton SC	26	12	9	5	44	24	45
Adelaide City	26	13	4	9	45	30	43
Sydney United	26	11	10	5	37	36	43
Marconi Fairfield	26	12	7	7	33	25	43
Wollongong Wolves	26	13	3	10	51	33	42
Melbourne Knights	26	11	6	9	37	35	39
Perth Glory	26	10	6	10	35	40	3
Sydney Olympic	26	10	5	11	37	43	35
Adelaide Sharks	26	10	4	12	32	38	34
Gippsland Falcons	26	8	7	11	28	36	31
Brisbane Strikers	26	6	5	15	23	40	23
Newcastle Breakers	26	4	9	13	30	50	21
Canberra Cosmos	26	3	8	15	29	56	17

## 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Results Grid

	ADEL CITY	BRIS STRK	CANB COSMOS	CARLT	GIPPS FALCON	MARC FAIR	MELB KNGTS	NEWC BREAK	PERTH GLORY	STH MELB	SYD UTD	UTS OLY	ADEL SHARK	WOLL CITY
ADELAIDE CITY		1-0	4-1	1-1	3-0	5-0	3-1	4-0	0-1	3-1	0-2	0-1	3-1	4-2
BRISBANE STRK	2-2		2-2	0-1	1-2	0-0	1-2	1-1	0-1	0-3	0-3	1-0	2-0	2-1
CANB COSMOS	1-2	2-1		1-3	1-3	0-2	1-1	1-1	1-2	1-1	1-3	8-1	1-0	1-3
CARLTON	3-1	1-1	2-0		4-1	0-1	1-1	3-0	2-1	2-3	1-1	0-1	1-1	1-0
GIPPS FALCONS	1-0	1-0	0-0	0-0		0-1	1-2	1-1	2-1	1-1	1-1	3-2	0-0	2-3
MARCONI FAIR	2-0	1-0	2-0	1-2	3-0		5-0	2-1	0-1	2-2	1-0	1-1	2-0	0-0
MELB KNIGHTS	2-0	2-0	3-1	2-4	0-1	2-1		4-1	1-2	1-1	0-0	2-1	1-0	1-0
NEWCASTLE	0-0	1-2	2-1	0-0	1-5	0-0	0-0		2-3	0-2	3-1	2-3	4-2	1-2
PERTH GLORY	1-4	1-3	1-1	0-0	2-1	1-1	3-2	3-4		4-1	0-2	1-0	2-2	0-3
STH MELBOURNE	4-1	5-1	1-1	0-5	2-1	3-1	2-2	2-1	3-3		3-0	2-2	4-1	3-2
SYDNEY UNITED	0-1	2-1	4-1	1-1	1-1	1-1	0-3	2-0	0-0	2-2		0-0	2-1	2-1
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	0-1	3-0	1-1	3-2	3-0	1-0	2-1	2-2	3-1	1-3	0-3		3-0	0-3
ADEL SHARKS	1-1	2-1	3-0	0-3	1-0	0-2	2-1	3-1	1-0	2-0	1-2	3-1		3-1
WOLL WOLVES	2-1	0-1	8-0	3-1	2-0	5-1	2-0	1-1	1-0	1-2	2-2	3-2	0-2	

## 1997/98 Leading Goalscorers (to end of Round 26)

**19**  
Damian Mori (Adelaide City)

**14**  
Norman Tome (Sydney Olympic)

**13**  
Pablo Cardozo (Adelaide Sharks)  
Andy Vlahos (Carlton SC)  
Scott Chipperfield (Wollongong Wolves)

**11**  
Tom Pondeljak (Melbourne Knights)  
Ivan Zelic (Melbourne Knights)  
John Markovski (Carlton SC)

**10**  
Pau Trimboli (South Melbourne)  
John Anastasiadis (Carlton SC)

**9**  
Abbas Saad (Sydney United)  
Peter Buljan (Canberra Cosmos)





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## 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Finals Details

### 1ST ELIMINATION FINAL - 1ST LEG

**WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2 (T. PERINICH 56'; K. SALAPASIDIS 83', 86') ADELAIDE CITY 0**

19-4-98. Brandon Park, Wollongong. Attendance: 10,954. Referee: S. Micallef.

Yellow Cards: (Wollongong) Sinozic 15'; Chipperfield 75'; Souris 85'.  
(Adelaide) Costanzo 6'; Mennillo 24'; Mori 44'; Tobin 81'.

### 2ND ELIMINATION FINAL 1ST LEG

**MARCONI FAIRFIELD 1 (F. AWARITEFE 22') SYDNEY UNITED 0**

19-4-98. Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Attendance: 10,113. Referee: M. Breeze.

Yellow Cards: (Marconi) McDonald 36'; M. Babic 39'; Kim 67'.  
(Sydney Utd) Hooker 17'; Bennett 36'; Bilokapic 43'; Kupresak 59'.  
Red Card: (Marconi) McDonald 43'.

### 1ST ELIMINATION FINAL - 2ND LEG

**ADELAIDE CITY 2 (M. BROOKS 17'; N. SABLIJAK 80') WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2 (A. CECCOLI 56'; K. SALAPASIDIS 75')**

26-4-98. Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide. Attendance: 4,497. Referee: E. Brazzale.

Yellow Cards: (Wollongong) Salapasis 65'.

### 2ND ELIMINATION FINAL - 2ND LEG

**SYDNEY UNITED 0 MARCONI FAIRFIELD 1 (F. AWARITEFE 71')**

26-4-98. Parramatta Stadium, Sydney. Attendance: 10,786. Referee: M. Shield.

Yellow Cards: (Sydney Utd) Culina 63'; Phillips 79'.  
(Marconi) M. Babic 25'; Z. Babic 76'.  
Red Card: (Sydney Utd) Kupresak 32'.

### MAJOR SEMI-FINAL - 1ST LEG

**CARLTON SC 1 (J. MARKOVSKI 89') SOUTH MELBOURNE 2 (P. TRIMBOLI 24'; J. ANASTASIADIS 34')**

26-4-98. Optus Oval, Melbourne. Attendance: 6,767. Referee: Brett Hugo.

Yellow Cards: (Carlton) Anastasiadis 23'; Della Rocca 32'; Douglas 73'; Markovski 82'; Josifovski 86'.  
(Sth Melbourne) Lozanovski 7'; Petkovic 89'.

### MINOR SEMI-FINAL

**MARCONI FAIRFIELD 2 (F. AWARITEFE 49'; B. MALONEY 65') WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1 (A. CECCOLI 69')**

2-5-98. Parramatta Stadium. Attendance: 8646. Referee: G. Connolly.

Yellow Cards: (Marconi) Smith 32'.  
(Wollongong) Surjan 54'.

### MAJOR SEMI-FINAL - 2ND LEG

**SOUTH MELBOURNE 1 (G. LOZANOVSKI 13') CARLTON SC 0**

3-5-98. Bob Jane Stadium, Melbourne. Attendance: 14,850. Referee: E. Lennie.

Yellow Cards: (Sth Melbourne) Clarkson 44'.  
(Carlton) Grella 32'; Anthopoulos 33'; Coosmo 57'; Bresciano 60'; Douglas 89'. Red Card: Anthopoulos 89'.

### PRELIMINARY FINAL

**CARLTON SC 1 (M. BRESCIANO 89') MARCONI FAIRFIELD 0**

10-5-98. Olympic Park, Melbourne. Attendance: 3672. Referee: S. Micallef.

Yellow Cards: (Carlton) Lapsansky 87'.  
(Marconi) Casserly 10'; McDonald 54'; M. Babic 59'.

## All the details of 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Grand Final

**Final score:** South Melbourne 2 (Anastasiadis 9th & Boutsianis 89th) - Carlton 1 (Stergiopoulos 78th).

**Played:** Saturday, May 16, 1998, at Olympic Park, Melbourne (first-ever night grand final).

**Attendance:** 15,706.

**Referee:** Eugene Brazzale.

**Linesmen:** Parry & Bowdler.

**Fourth official:** Connolly.

**Yellow Cards:** Blatsis 27th, Trajkovski 39th, Douglas 54th, Colosimo 73rd, D.Cervinski 77th & Markovski 83rd.

**Red cards:** Nil.

### THE TEAMS:

**South Melbourne:** No.1 Michael Petkovic, 2 Steve Iosifidis, 3 Fausto De Amicis, 5 Con Blatsis, 6 David Clarkson, 9 Paul Trimboli (Capt), 11 Bill Damianos, 15 Goran Lozanovski (8 Vaughan Coveny 75th), 16 Tansel Baser, 17 John Anastasiadis (12 Con Boutsianis 84th).

Subs not used - Nick Orlic, Michael Curcija, Chris Jones.

Coach - Angie Postecoglou.

**Carlton:** 1 Dean Anastasiadis, 2 Robert Trajkovski, 5 Sean Douglas (Capt), 7 Kresimir Marusic, 10 Lubo Lapsansky, 11 Andy Vlahos (25 Adrian Cervinski 64th), 12 Simon Colosimo, 14 John Markovski, 15 David Cervinski (3 Marcus Stergiopoulos 77th), 17 Mark Atkinson, 23 Marco Bresciano.

Subs not used - David Della Rocca, Alex Josifovski, Adrian Cagalj.

Coach - Eddie Krncevic.

**Marsden Medal for Man of the Match:** Fausto De Amicis (Sth Melb)

# Ericsson Cup 1997/98 Crowds, Round by Round

Round	Total for Round	Round Average	Season Aggregate	Best crowd of Round
1	33 547	4792	33 547	7,007 at Sydney Olympic -v- Marconi Fairfield
2	46 597	6657	80 144	17,673 at Perth Glory -v- Adelaide City
3	29 538	4220	109 682	5,737 at Adelaide City -v- Sydney United
4	42 704	6100	152 386	14,384 at Perth Glory -v- Melbourne Knights
5	29 736	4248	182 122	5,235 at Marconi Fairfield -v- South Melbourne
6	44 464	6352	226 586	16,905 at Perth Glory -v- Sydney Olympic
7	28 214	4031	254 800	5,641 at Sydney Olympic -v- Sydney United
8	42 431	6062	297 231	17,030 at Perth Glory -v- Adelaide Sharks
9	20 348	2907	317 579	4,064 at Adelaide Sharks -v- Sydney United
10	37 497	5357	355 076	15,379 at Perth Glory -v- South Melbourne
11	45 503	6500	400 579	15,080 at Perth Glory -v- Wollongong Wolves
12	39 815	5687	440 394	12,174 at Perth Glory -v- Canberra Cosmos
13	51 195	7314	491 589	17,764 at Perth Glory -v- Sydney United
14	28 836	4119	520 425	6,115 at Adelaide City -v- South Melbourne
15	47 158	6737	567 583	14,687 at Perth Glory -v- Carlton SC
16	29 473	4210	597 056	9,217 at Melbourne Knights -v- South Melbourne
17	33 439	4777	630 495	13,341 at Perth Glory -v- Brisbane Strikers
18	27 177	3882	657 672	5,509 at Sydney Olympic -v- South Melbourne
19	36 471	5210	694 143	13,228 at Perth Glory -v- Newcastle Breakers
20	24 586	3512	718 729	5,185 at Melbourne Knights -v- Carlton SC
21	34 772	4968	753 501	11,260 at Perth Glory -v- Gipps and Falcons
22	26 057	3722	779 558	7,362 at Marconi Fairfield -v- Sydney United
23	36 369	5196	815 927	15,725 at Perth Glory -v- Marconi Fairfield
24	24 370	3481	840 297	5,670 at South Melbourne -v- Perth Glory
25	30 437	4348	870 734	7,937 at Adelaide City -v- Adelaide Sharks
26	28 813	4116	899 547	8,725 at South Melbourne -v- Carlton SC
Finals Week 1	21 067	10534	920 614	10,954 at Wollongong Wolves -v- Adelaide City
Finals Week 2	22 050	7350	942 664	10,786 at Sydney United -v- Marconi Fairfield
Finals Week 3	23 496	11748	966 160	14,850 at South Melbourne -v- Carlton SC
Finals Week 4	3 672	3672	969 832	3,672 at Carlton SC -v- Marconi Fairfield
Finals Week 5	15 706	15706	985538	15,706 at South Melbourne -v- Carlton SC



## Ericsson Cup Roll of Honour

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	TOP 4/5 CUP WINNER
1977	Sydney City	Brisbane City	No competition
1978	West Adelaide	Brisbane City	Sydney City
1979	Marconi Fairfield	Adelaide City	Sydney City
1980	Sydney City	Marconi Fairfield	Heidelberg United
1981	Sydney City	Brisbane Lions	No competition
1982	Sydney City	Apia Leichardt	St George
1983	St George	Sydney Olympic	No competition

\* 1977 to 1983 (One division, with champion first past the post)

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	DIVISION CHAMPION
1984	South Melbourne	Newcastle Rosebud	North - Sydney Olympic / South - South Melbourne
1985	Brunswick United	Sydney Olympic	North - Sydney City / South - Brunswick United
1986	Adelaide City	Sydney City	North - Sydney Olympic / South - Adelaide City

\* 1984 to 1986 (Two divisions, with championship decided by national grand final)

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	TOP 5 CUP WINNER
1987	Apia Leichardt	Sydney United	St George

\* 1987 (One division, with champion first past the post)

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	PREMIER
1988	Marconi Fairfield	Apia Leichardt	Wollongong Wolves
1989	Marconi Fairfield	Adelaide City	Marconi Fairfield
1989/90	Sydney Olympic	South Melbourne	Marconi Fairfield
1990/91	South Melbourne	Parramatta Eagles	Melbourne Knights
1991/92	Adelaide City	Adelaide City	Melbourne Knights
1992/93	Marconi Fairfield	Heidelberg United	South Melbourne
1993/94	Adelaide City	Parramatta Eagles	Melbourne Knights
1994/95	Melbourne Knights	Melbourne Knights	Melbourne Knights
1995/96	Melbourne Knights	South Melbourne	Marconi Fairfield
1996/97	Brisbane Strikers	Coalingwood Warriors	Sydney United
1997/98	South Melbourne	No competition	South Melbourne

\* 1988 to 1997/98 (One division, champion decided by national grand final, premier decided by first past the post)



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# Ericsson Cup Awards History

## PLAYER OF THE YEAR

1977	<b>Jim Rooney</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1978	<b>Ken Boden</b> (Newcastle KB United)
1979	<b>Ivo Prskalo</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1980	<b>Jim Hermiston</b> (Brisbane Lions)
1981	<b>Bobby Russell</b> (Adelaide City)
1982	<b>Peter Katholos</b> (Sydney Olympic)
1983	<b>Joe Watson</b> (Sydney City)
1984	<b>Serge Melta</b> (Adelaide City)
1985	<b>Graham Honeyman</b> (Adelaide Sharks)
1986	<b>Bobby Russell</b> (South Melbourne) <b>Graham Arnold</b> (Sydney United)
1987	<b>Andrew Zinni</b> (Melbourne Zebras) <b>Frank Farina</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1988	<b>Paul Wade</b> (South Melbourne) <b>Frank Farina</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1989	<b>Zlatko Nastevski</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1989/90	<b>Zeljko Adzic</b> (Melbourne Knights)
1990/91	<b>Milan Ivanovic</b> (Adelaide City)
1991/92	<b>Josip Biskic</b> (Melbourne Knights)
1992/93	<b>Paul Trimboli</b> (South Melbourne)
1993/94	<b>Mark Viduka</b> (Melbourne Knights)
1994/95	<b>Mark Viduka</b> (Melbourne Knights)
1995/96	<b>Damian Mori</b> (Adelaide City)
1996/97	<b>Kresimir Marusic</b> (Sydney United)
1997/98	<b>Paul Trimboli</b> (South Melbourne)

## LEAGUE TOP SCORERS

1977	<b>Dixie Deans</b> (Adelaide City) - 16
1978	<b>Ken Boden</b> (Newcastle KB Ltd) - 14
	<b>Clive Eaton</b> (Western Suburbs) - 14
1979	<b>Mark Jankovic</b> (Marconi Fairfield) - 18
1980	<b>Gary Cole</b> (Heidelberg Utd) - 21
1981	<b>Gary Cole</b> (Heidelberg Utd) - 16
1982	<b>John Kosmina</b> (Sydney City) - 23
1983	<b>Doug Brown</b> (South Melbourne) - 16
1984	<b>Doug Brown</b> (South Melbourne) - 22
1985	<b>Charlie Egan</b> (South Melbourne) - 21
1986	<b>Graham Arnold</b> (Sydney United) - 16
1987	<b>Frank Farina</b> (Marconi Fairfield) - 16
1988	<b>Frank Farina</b> (Marconi Fairfield) - 16
1989	<b>Zlatko Nastevski</b> (Marconi Fairfield) - 20
1989/90	<b>David Seal</b> (Sydney United) - 15
1990/91	<b>David Seal</b> (Marconi Fairfield) - 17
1991/92	<b>Tim Bredbury</b> (Sydney Olympic) - 15
	<b>Kimion Taliadoros</b> (South Melbourne) - 15
1992/93	<b>Francis Awaritefe</b> (South Melbourne) - 18
1993/94	<b>Mark Viduka</b> (Melbourne Knights) - 17
1994/95	<b>Mark Viduka</b> (Melbourne Knights) - 18
1995/96	<b>Damian Mori</b> (Adelaide City) - 31
1996/97	<b>David Zdrilic</b> (Sydney United) - 21
1997/98	<b>Damian Mori</b> (Adelaide City) - 19

## UNDER-21 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

1977	<b>John Kosmina</b> (Adelaide Sharks)
1978	<b>Ian Souness</b> (Sydney City)
1979	<b>Eddie Krncevic</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1980	<b>John Spanos</b> (Sydney City)
1981	<b>David Mitchell</b> (Adelaide City)
1982	<b>David Lowe</b> (Newcastle KB Utd)
1983	<b>Oscar Crino</b> (South Melbourne)
1984	<b>Tony Franken</b> (Canberra City)
1985	<b>Alan Hunter</b> (Brisbane Lions)
1986	<b>Ernie Tapai</b> (Melbourne City)
1987	<b>John Markovski</b> (Sunshine George Cross)
1988	<b>Paul Trimboli</b> (South Melbourne)
1989	<b>Paul Trimboli</b> (South Melbourne)
1989/90	<b>Paul Okon</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1990/91	<b>Paul Okon</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1991/92	<b>Kevin Muscat</b> (Heidelberg United)
1992/93	<b>Steve Corica</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1993/94	<b>Mark Viduka</b> (Melbourne Knights)
1994/95	<b>Mark Viduka</b> (Melbourne Knights)
1995/96	<b>Jim Tsekini</b> (Adelaide Sharks)
1996/97	<b>Kasey Wehrman</b> (Brisbane Strikers)
1997/98	<b>Brett Emerton</b> (Sydney Olympic)

## COACH OF THE YEAR

1977	<b>Rale Rasic</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1978	<b>Gerry Chaldi</b> (Sydney City)
1979	<b>Les Scheinflug</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1980	<b>John Margaritis</b> (South Melbourne)
1981	<b>Eddie Thomson</b> (Sydney City)
1982	<b>Frank Arok</b> (St George)
1983	<b>Frank Arok</b> (St George)
1984	<b>Eddie Thomson</b> (Sydney City)
1985	<b>Eddie Thomson</b> (Sydney City)
1986	<b>Drago Sekularic</b> (Melbourne City)
1987	<b>Rale Rasic</b> (Apia Leichardt)
1988	<b>Brian Garvey</b> (South Melbourne)
1989	<b>Berti Mariani</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1989/90	<b>Berti Mariani</b> (Marconi Fairfield)
1990/91	<b>Zoran Matic</b> (Adelaide City)
1991/92	<b>David Ratcliffe</b> (Wollongong Wolves)
1992/93	<b>Jim Pyrgolios</b> (South Melbourne)
1993/94	<b>Mirko Bazic</b> (Melbourne Knights)
1994/95	<b>Zoran Matic</b> (Adelaide City)
1995/96	<b>John Perin</b> (Adelaide City)
1996/97	<b>Branko Culina</b> (Sydney United)
1997/98	<b>Angie Postecoglou</b> (South Melbourne)

## 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Awards

### PLAYERS' PLAYER OF THE YEAR - WARREN MEDAL

Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)

### ANSETT AUSTRALIA LEADING GOALSCORER OF THE YEAR

Damian Mori (Adelaide City) - scorer of 19 goals

### COACH OF THE YEAR

Angie Postecoglou (South Melbourne)

### UNDER-21 PLAYER OF THE YEAR - PAPASAVAS MEDAL

Brett Emerton (UTS Olympic)

### UHLSPORT GOALKEEPER OF THE YEAR

Jason Petkovc (Adelaide City)

### LOTTO REFEREE OF THE YEAR

Eugene Brazzale

### LOTTO ASSISTANT REFEREE OF THE YEAR

Michael Parry

### NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

SOUTHERN DIVISION  
Ivica Klarica (Carlton SC)

### NORTHERN DIVISION

Mile Sterjovski (Australian Institute of Sport)

## 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Media Awards

### Magazine Award for Best Report

Anthony Raineri (Sports Monthly)

### Magazine Award for Best Feature Report

Chris Maher (Soccer Australia Magazine)

### Radio Award for Best Report (news or feature)

Mario Etchart (SBS Radio)

### Television Award for Best Report (sport news content)

Robert Grasso (SBS Television)

### Television Award for Best Feature Story

Neil Cordy (Channel 10)

### Photography Award for Best Picture

Joe Mann (The Daily Telegraph Mirror)

### Newspaper Award for Best Report

James Nicholson (The Canberra Times)

### Newspaper Award for Best Feature

Patrick Mangan (The Sunday Age)

### Most Outstanding Achievement in Soccer Journalism

Peter Desira (The Herald Sun)

## 1997/98 National Youth League Finals Results

### SOUTHERN DIVISION

#### Elimination Semi-Final:

Gippsland Falcons 1 Victorian Institute of Sport 3

#### Preliminary Semi-Final:

Melbourne Knights 0 Carlton SC 3

#### Preliminary Final

Melbourne Knights 3 Victorian Institute of Sport 4

#### Divisional Grand Final

Carlton SC 0 Victorian Institute of Sport 2

#### Divisional Play-off

Victorian Institute of Sport 1 Adelaide City 3

### NORTHERN DIVISION

#### Elimination Semi-Final

Sydney United 0 Wollongong Wolves 1

#### Preliminary Semi-Final

Australian Institute of Sport 2 UTS Olympic 2

#### Preliminary Final

UTS Olympic 1 Wollongong Wolves 2

#### Divisional Grand Final

Australian Institute of Sport 2 Wollongong Wolves 0

#### NATIONAL PLAY-OFF

Adelaide City 1 Australian Institute of Sport 4

# Did You Know That?

#### MOST CONSECUTIVE VICTORIES: 9

by Sydney Olympic in 1984 and by Sydney United in 1996/97

#### MOST CONSECUTIVE DEFEATS: 12 games

by Canberra Cosmos in 1996/97 and 1997/98

#### LONGEST UNDEFEATED RUN: 22 games

by Apia Leichhardt during 1986 and 1987

#### MOST TEAM GOALS IN A SEASON: 68

by Sydney City in 1982

#### LEAST TEAM GOALS IN A SEASON: 16

by Green Gully in 1986

#### BIGGEST CROWD (REGULAR SEASON): 18,367

at Newcastle's International Sports Centre in 1979, for Newcastle KB United v UTS Olympic

#### BIGGEST CROWD (FINAL): 40,446

at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium in 1996/97, for grand final between Brisbane Strikers v Sydney United

#### LOWEST CROWD EVER: 192

at Sydney's Gabbie Stadium in 1989, for Blacktown City v Heidelberg United

#### QUICKEST GOAL: 3.7 seconds

by Damian Mori for Adelaide City v Sydney United in 1995/96, at Adelaide's Hindmarsh Stadium

#### MOST CLUB GOALS IN ONE GAME: 10

by Adelaide City in 10-3 win v Mooroolbark in 1977, at Olympic Sports Field in Adelaide

#### MOST INDIVIDUAL GOALS IN ONE GAME: 6

by Ivan Kelic of the Melbourne Knights in 8-1 win over Wollongong Mac., at Knights Stadium in 1990/91 and by Pat Brodnik of Wollongong City in 7-0 win over Adelaide Sharks, at Brandon Park in 1989/90

#### HIGHEST SCORE DRAW: 5-5

by Newcastle Breakers v Canberra Cosmos in 1995/96, at Breakers Stadium

#### MOST WINS IN ONE SEASON: 20

by Sydney City in 1982

#### MOST DEFEATS IN ONE SEASON: 24

by Newcastle Breakers in 1994/95

#### YOUNGEST PLAYER (FINAL): 16 yrs 5 mths

John Markovski of Sunshine George Cross in 1986

#### BEST REGULAR SEASON AGGREGATE

ATTENDANCE: 997,004

in 1996/97

#### BEST CLUB SINGLE SEASON HOME

AVERAGE CROWD: 14,972

by Perth Glory in 1997/98

#### MOST TEAM GRAND FINAL WINS: 5

by Marconi, South Melbourne and Adelaide City

#### MOST CLUBS COACHED: 7

by Rale Rasic (Marconi, Adelaide City, Blacktown, South Melbourne, Apia, Parramatta Eagles and Canberra Cosmos)

#### MOST GAMES COACHED: 439

by Frank Arok, at St George, Marconi, South Melbourne and Gippsland

#### MOST CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS: 4

by Marconi and Sydney City

#### PLAYERS TO SCORE 100 OR MORE

##### CAREER GOALS: 8

they are Rod Brown (137), John Kosmina (133), Marshall Soper (120), Damian Mori (111), Gary Cole (109), Warren Spink (104), Frank Farina (102) and Francis Awaritefe (102)

#### PLAYERS TO PLAY 300 OR MORE

##### GAMES: 25

they are Serg Melta (445), Mike O'Shea (406), Theo Selemdis (394), Gary Phillips (377), Alex Tobin (376), Danny Wright (353), Graham Jennings (351), Rod Brown (347), David Lowe (345), Alan Hunter (343), Steve Blair (338), Joe Mullen (334), Ian Gray (332), Paul Wade (331), Peter Katholos (329), Alan Davidson (326), Paul Trimboli (318), Jean-Paul De Marigny (318), Marshall Soper (318), David Ratcliffe (316), Robbie Hooker (315), Charlie Yankos (308), Gerry Gomez (303), Bugsy Nyskohous (300) and Jeff Oliver (300)





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# Gunsights aimed at ARSENAL

**Arguably returning to its former place on the international sporting dais as the world's number one domestic football competition, the English Premier League is geared up for another compelling season. Here Mark Seymour provides the form guide to the 1998/99 campaign.**

As another English Premier League campaign gets underway, armchair managers and long-suffering fans the world over are all talking up their team's chances and debating over who'll take the dreaded drop, who'll win the ultimate prize come May and who'll just go nowhere at all.

Never an easy league to pick, the English top division nevertheless has its usual suspects like any other. Some teams will inevitably be there or thereabouts, while others always just seem to make up the numbers in this most lucrative of domestic club competitions.

Breaking the 20 teams up into four groups of 'contenders', 'possibles', 'also-rans' and 'relegation fodder', analysis should begin at the top with last season's winners Arsenal.

## CONTENDERS

Not content with winning the League and FA Cup double for a record equalling second

time (with Man Utd), Arsene Wenger's French players Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit then had to go on and lift the World Cup. Unlikely as they are to ever top that particular season they would nevertheless expect to challenge strongly for honours again this term, with Argentinian defender Nelson Vivas bought over the northern summer to bolster an ageing defence. Despite the exit of Gunners legend Ian Wright to West Ham and the possibility of several World Cup sized hangovers for Wenger's star-studded squad, the champions should be a fixture near the summit all season long. Wenger's management style seems to finally be paying dividends with Marc Overmars and Dennis Bergkamp finding some stunning form when most needed during the run-in to last season's climax. Their only distraction may come from a testing Champions League competition, which as Manchester United found to their cost in 1997/98, can be fatal.

As for Alex Ferguson's men, no greater motivation is needed than a trophy-less season. Ferguson has made big summer signings in the world's most expensive defender Jaap Stam and winger Jesper Blomqvist. Gone are veterans Gary Pallister and Brian McClair, along with reserve goalkeeper Kevin Pilkington. A big-name striker has also been on Ferguson's mind along with the desire to take back what United in the 1990s consider to be their crown.

Liverpool, perhaps sensing the need for a shake-up in the party atmosphere (at least on the pitch) at Anfield have recruited former

technical director of the French Football Association Gerard Houllier as co-manager alongside Roy Evans. Many of Liverpool supporters were surprised to see Evans remain in the managerial hot-seat and an unusual step may be the first sign in an unwillingness to wait much longer for success in honours. Despite failing to land Spurs defender Sol Campbell to bolster a decidedly fragile defence, Liverpool will no doubt be formidable if unpredictable opponents appear always. Uninspiring seasons from Karlheinz Riedle and Patrik Berger won't help their longevity at Anfield, although the return of defender Steve Staunton and the emergence of teenage World Cup star Michael Owen keep fading Scouse hopes alive.

Chelsea, after having a successful Cup season (FA and Cup-Winners Cups) will be hoping to land the really big fish this time with manager Gianluca Vialli spending more than £12 million on new signings. Chelsea's challenge is scrutinised elsewhere in this but it is certain they will expect to improve on last season's creditable fourth placing.

## POSSIBLES

Only newly promoted Division One champions Nottingham Forest may be the one of as outsiders. Forest have traditionally performed well when they bounce back up to the top division and while the days of Clough and Co. winning European Cups may have gone, Forest could well turn out to be a dark horse in this race.

Blackburn, having sold stalwart Scott Hendry to Rangers, may leak more goals





ously, but Tim Flowers remains an  
-sive keeper while Chris Sutton seems  
on proving himself as one of England's  
overlooked strikers. Their improvement  
r manager Roy Hodgson should continue  
season, along with Aston Villa. Restless  
ng staff aside, Villa has some exceptional  
t and a manager in John Gregory who is  
ranger to mind games and motivational  
s. Inconsistent injury victim Stan  
more won't start the season but he  
tly proved himself fighting fit in a  
ch bar, allegedly beating up his TV  
onality girlfriend after she got more  
tion than he did. Although Brazilian  
who declined to join the Midlands,  
ie Mark Bosnich makes Villa a team to be  
oned with.

### ALSO-RANS

ere you'll find perennial favourites like  
s, where Sydney-born Harry Kewell and  
y-Floyd Hasselbaink struggle to excite in  
ge Graham's dour team. No major  
ngs and an unlikely repeat of last  
on's fifth place mark them down as a  
not to watch. Tottenham Hotspur and  
castle will also be happy with mid-table  
es come May after last season's flirtation  
relegation. Newcastle manager Kenny  
lish may find himself under pressure if  
er golden boy Alan Shearer continues his  
return to form. New striker, Frenchman  
hane Guivarc'h, showed in the World Cup  
nows where the goal is, if not how to put  
ball into it, so Shearer will need to be  
t to his best. Christian Gross will be  
ng himself under similar strain at Spurs,  
re Les Ferdinand and David Ginola will no  
t be considering their diminishing options  
re the season is out.

Wimbledon, Middlesbrough, Derby County  
Sheffield Wednesday could all make a  
ent team if a merger were being  
sidered, but individually they'll just be  
oy to keep their Premiership places. With  
Merson and Gascolgne joined by the  
erience of Gary Pallister, Middlesbrough  
d make a play for the top half of the  
e, while Sheffield Wednesday also show  
ction with the arrival of Dutch midfielder  
Jonk. New boss Danny Wilson will want

to hold on to the Italian combination of Di  
Canio and Carbone to keep the fans happy  
and the goals flowing.

Derby and Wimbledon for their part can  
only hope to pick up some cheap signings as  
they have done successfully in the past and  
will always prove thorny, if inconsistent  
opposition.

### RELEGATION FODDER

This will seem familiar territory to the  
likes of Coventry and Southampton. Season  
after season these two battle against the  
odds and more often than not manage to stay  
up on the final day of the season. Coventry  
will be hoping their amazing run in the top  
division continues with favourite Dion Dublin  
re-signing.

Southampton manager David Jones has  
signed former Chelsea and Man Utd striker  
Mark Hughes along with Blackburn winger  
Stuart Ripley. If David Hirst overcomes his  
season-threatening injury these three front-  
runners alone should justify Saints fans' die-  
hard optimism. Match-winner Matt Le Tissier  
can always be relied upon to conjure up  
something special and he'll no doubt have the  
burden of expectation on his shoulders once  
again.

Everton has secured Scot John Collins  
from Monaco after a disappointing World Cup  
and new manager, former Rangers boss  
Walter Smith, will hope the diminutive  
midfielder can bring out the best in fiery  
Duncan Ferguson. Everton fans will expect  
nothing less than mid-table safety after last  
season's goal-difference, last-gasp escape  
from the drop.

Charlton Athletic and Leicester will both  
find the going tough. Charlton look like being  
the Barnsley of this campaign with the pace  
and power of the Premiership proving too  
much for the smaller clubs who come up. Their  
fans may well enjoy the ride more than the  
players do.

### SUMMARY

The huge influx of foreign players into  
England's premier division continues, with  
Chelsea and Arsenal leading the way in terms  
of star-pulling power and spiralling wages.  
Many observers see this trend as a  
destructive turn for the worse, denying many

young native players their chance at exposure  
in England's top clubs. Interestingly,  
Frenchman Arsene Wenger himself recently  
voiced this concern when asked his position.  
Few fans of either Arsenal or Chelsea would  
support this view, their two clubs winning the  
League title, FA Cup, League Cup, and  
European Cup-Winners Cup between them  
last term. Money brings success and it would  
seem the same four cash-rich clubs will  
feature at the top again come mid-May, but in  
what order?

### WE SAY.....IT'S CHELSEA

Yes, Patrick Mangan's story elsewhere in  
this issue has been enough to sway the  
doubters here at Soccer Australia magazine.

According to our poll of staff experts  
Chelsea will break a 44-year drought and win  
the English Premier League title, but not  
before a nail-biting finish.

Patrick's compelling story on Chelsea's  
glamorous foreign legion was enough to tip  
the scales, but there was little to split the  
leading contenders, which included  
Liverpool, Manchester United and title-  
holders Arsenal, as well as surprise-packets  
Newcastle United.

### HERE'S HOW WE PREDICT THE PREMIERSHIP RACE TO END:

CHELSEA  
LIVERPOOL  
MANCHESTER UNITED  
NEWCASTLE UNITED  
ARSENAL  
MIDDLESBROUGH  
ASTON VILLA  
COVENTRY CITY  
NOTTINGHAM FOREST  
LEEDS UNITED  
DERBY COUNTY  
WEST HAM UNITED  
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR  
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY  
BLACKBURN ROVERS  
LEICESTER CITY  
WIMBLEDON  
EVERTON  
SOUTHAMPTON  
CHARLTON ATHLETIC



# Bellissimi

## Chelsea's foreign legion lights up Stamford Bridge

**The foreign revolution sweeping English soccer is typified by Chelsea, a club where there are so many Europeans in the squad it's possible that local players won't get a look in this season. Globetrotting Soccer Australia editor Patrick Mangan examines England's latest glamour team.**

When Arsenal paid \$16 million for Dennis Bergkamp in 1995, cross-town rivals Tottenham were unimpressed. Spurs chairman Alan Sugar complained about the fad where any old "Carlos Kickaball" with a video of half a dozen decent goals he'd scored for Sporting Gijon (or any one of a hundred clubs English fans hadn't heard of) would be making his way over here while the going was good. But when it was raining throughout the dismal British winter these players would disappear, said Sugar.

Three years later, the only thing vanishing is Sugar's prejudice, as even his beloved Tottenham began the 1998/99 campaign with French, Swiss, Italian, Moroccan, Danish and Norwegian players on their books.

For proof that the Europeans are here to stay in English football, look no further than a couple of miles up the Seven Sisters Road at Arsenal, which won the championship last season due in no small part to the influence of French and Dutch stars (Bergkamp himself didn't have a bad year, you might remember).

But if you want to get to the heart of England's newly-acquired taste for overseas talent, it's another London club, Chelsea, which needs the closest examination.

As the season kicked off, Chelsea was able to field an entire starting XI of non-English players, and the insularity which has stunted the growth of British football over the past half century is under threat. Out Chelsea way, the only Englishman guaranteed a spot even on the bench these days is Blues assistant coach, Graham Rix.

But if a foreign invasion is what it takes to propel Chelsea into the ranks of the Premiership superpowers, there will be few complaints from the club's long-suffering supporters. The Blues have had their fans tearing their hair out for most of the modern era, their inconsistency the stuff of footballing legend.

Ask any Chelsea fan, whose memories of



occasional exhilarating victories over Liverpool or Manchester United have been matched with frustrating regularity by embarrassing defeats to teams not fit to lace the boots of the London glamour boys - on paper, at least.

A 6-0 hammering by lowly Rotherham in a second division game in the early 80s seems a reasonable starting point for any discussion

about why masochism is an essential element in supporting the lads from Stamford Bridge.

Despite (or perhaps because of) their devastating inconsistency, Chelsea has been one of England's most popular clubs for decades. A solitary league championship win in 1955, supplemented only by a brief period in the late 60s and early 70s when the Blues won the FA Cup and European Cup Winners Cup, wasn't much to show for almost a hundred years' existence, but everything changed at Chelsea with the arrival of Glenn Hoddle as a manager in 1993.

Chairman Ken Bates' hiring of Hoddle proved a masterstroke. Not only did the former Spurs and England playmaker transform an emerging Chelsea team with his finesse on the park, the reputation Hoddle had forged throughout Europe made the club an attractive proposition to overseas players who otherwise may not have thought twice about joining a poorly-credentialled London team.

Ruud Gullit was one such player and the day he first posed in a Chelsea shirt in mid-1995 marked the beginning of the foreign invasion at the Bridge which has continued unabated since.

And who better to lead the invasion - with Gullit arriving in England as one of the most highly-decorated footballers in history, his trophy cabinet replete with everything from Italian championship to European Cup to European championship medals.

Gullit quickly became the Blues' main man on the field, and when Hoddle was tempted by



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an offer to manage the English national team, the dreadlocked Dutchman took the reins at Chelsea.

It was a shock to the system of the more conservative local fans - who in their right mind would have predicted that a Chelsea team would ever be managed by a former European champion with braided hair falling all over his face?

Gullit continued where Hoddle had left off, rapidly building a team to be reckoned with. Along with the high-profile signing of Gullit's former Sampdoria team-mate, Gianluca Vialli, fellow Italians Roberto Di Matteo and Gianfranco Zola, and French stopper Franck Le Boeuf joined the Blues in quick succession, and Chelsea was soon beating a path towards major honours.

The consistency needed to win the championship was proving elusive, but Hoddle's 1994 achievement of leading Chelsea to a first FA Cup final appearance for 24 years was quickly overshadowed by his successor in the Stamford Bridge hotseat.

In 1997, Gullit took Chelsea to its first major trophy in a quarter of a century, a 2-0 FA Cup win against relegated Middlesbrough. Fittingly, the opening goal of the game, within the first minute, was scored by one of the Dutch manager's shrewdest buys - Di Matteo almost tearing the net with his 25-metre screamer.

Gullit was fast becoming a hero of near-biblical proportions. But in an almost biblical cautionary tale, the Dutchman seemed to want too much, too soon. Early this year, with the club riding high in the Premiership, with a place booked in the semi-final of the League Cup and the quarter-final of the European Cup Winners Cup, Gullit was axed.

The story goes that Gullit demanded a king's ransom when negotiating his managerial contract, and the club's famously prickly chairman, Bates, saw red.

Vialli took charge with the dust barely settled, and the expression on his face at the media conference to announce his appointment suggested he was no less surprised that anyone else to find himself elevated from Gullit's sparingly-used supersub to player-manger of one of the most

glamorous teams in England.

Within a matter of weeks, the former Juventus star had presided over the most successful period in Chelsea's history, with two major trophies claimed. A 2-0 win over Middlesbrough (again) in the League Cup final was followed by victory over VfB Stuttgart in the European Cup Winners Cup final, a first European triumph for an English club since 1994.

Zola came off the bench against the Germans to score a late winner and claim his place as a Stamford Bridge immortal, but by the beginning of the current campaign he was just another attacking player in a squad bulging with international talent.

After a close-season in which the Danish wizard Brian Laudrup and Italian striker Pierluigi Casiraghi joined French World Cup winner Marcel Desailly and Spaniard Albert Ferrer as the latest arrivals, Chelsea's league of nations assault for honours in 1998/99 was complete.

Thirteen countries competed in the first World Cup in 1930 and remarkably Chelsea now boasts representatives from as many nations, with players from as far afield as Scandinavia, South America and Africa.

The jury is out as to whether signing a disparate group of stars from around the world is a recipe for success or for trouble - witness AC Milan's woes in recent years - but you won't hear too many complaints from supporters of the Stamford Bridge side.

With memories of struggling in the old second division in the late 1980s all too fresh, a season of sitting at the Bridge watching Desailly, Laudrup, Casiraghi, Zola, and even the boss Vialli in action, is a treat the Blues faithful would scarcely have believed possible just five or six years ago.

Now all the players have to do is knock off Arsenal, Manchester United, Liverpool and co. and win the championship to justify the massive outlay the club has made in the last couple of years.

A pleasant problem for a club which hasn't won the title for nearly half a century. Just ask any Chelsea fan - the Blues, thanks to an ever-expanding foreign legion, are back in the big time at last.





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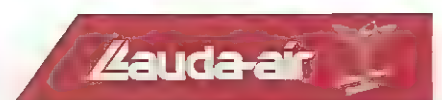
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# Northern Exposure

**According to our man on the spot for this story, Ray Galt, the 1998/99 appearance of new Ericsson Cup club Northern Spirit is "one of the most exciting things to happen to the local game in many a year." However the national jury is still out on the largely experimental Sydney club, with prototype model Carlton yet to dramatically impact at the turnstiles and WA's Perth Glory unable to turn box office success into on-field achievement.**

There was a time not so long ago when Remo Nogarotto was the "boss man" for one of the most powerful and successful soccer clubs in Australia. Under his chairmanship of the football section of Club Marconi, the Stallions won two grand finals in the late 1980's and were beaten in another.

A young man with superb business skills, a sharp look and intelligence to boot, Nogarotto was a man on the go. It was no secret he was being groomed for higher things in the game, with a role on the board of Soccer Australia beckoning. But, as quickly as he arrived on the scene, he was gone.

These days Nogarotto's passion for the game still burns brightly even if his interests

and energies have switched from the working class areas of Sydney's south western suburbs to the "silvertails" of Sydney's north shore. To many, it is a stark contrast, but one for which Nogarotto makes no apologies.

As chairman of new Ericsson Cup national league club Northern Spirit, he is now the face of one of the most exciting things to happen to the local game in many a year. The entry into the NSL of a club like Northern Spirit, with its charter to develop and promote the sport on the north shore, is long overdue. When Spirit kicks off its first match at picturesque North Sydney Oval it will be the fruition of 18 months of hard work for Nogarotto and his good mate and club vice-chairman Emmanuel Zammit, who have lived and breathed the club.

To say Nogarotto is excited is an understatement. "I honestly believe we are one of the most exciting things to happen to Australian soccer for many years," he says. "The NSL, and the north shore, has been crying out for this. "The league in Sydney has been virtually moribund and we present the best chance to change things around. "A lot of time, effort and research has gone into this venture and I am super confident we will succeed."

Nogarotto makes no secret of his determination for Spirit to carry no ethnic

baggage. The NSL has struggled over the years because of the perception clubs pandered solely to ethnic groups. "We are not Italian, Scottish, Macedonian, Greek, Croatian or whatever," he says defiantly. "We are starting with a clean sheet. We have no ethnic ties whatsoever. "But, we will welcome everyone to our club. We are universal and will embrace people from every walk of life."

Apart from Nogarotto and Zammit, the board includes Sydney City councillor Kathryn Greiner, the wife of former NSW Premier Nick Kerry Chikarovski, the Liberal State MP for Lance Cove and former Marconi and Young Socceroo striker Rene Licata, who owns a part share of the club. The major stakeholder (70 per cent) of Spirit is Mark Goldberg, one of the richest entrepreneurs in Britain and owner of English first division club, Crystal Palace.

Spirit has left nothing to chance in its bid to capture a large slice of the Sydney sport's market. They have hired the best coaching staff, some of the best Australian talent in and outside the country, an excellent management team and aligned themselves with some of the best junior nurseries in Sydney. Spirit will have a tremendous base of about 25,000 kids who play in the Manly Warringah, Gladesville Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai districts.





Double trouble  
Spirit's marquee signings,  
Graham Arnold (above)  
and Robbie Slater



Nogarotto fairly bristles when the "cynics" jump to conclusions regarding Crystal Palace's involvement with the club.

Almost immediately the whispers around soccer circles here centered on Palace manager Terry Venables, well known to local fans as the former Socceroo coach, and his involvement in the deal. Which was why Nogarotto was at pains to dispel the rumours during a press conference to announce the Palace takeover at North Sydney Oval in August. "I was prepared for that question," Nogarotto said when a television interviewer quizzed him about Venables. "I can tell you categorically that Terry Venables has no financial equity whatsoever in Northern Spirit... and we would not be prepared to accept anything else in that regard. "Terry will have no directorship because we are only interested in his football mind."

Nogarotto describes Palace's involvement with Spirit as "one of the most exciting things to happen to Australian soccer - the benefits are enormous, both for Palace and Spirit," he said. Financially, Spirit will receive an immediate cash infusion... an initial working capital of \$2 million which, according to Nogarotto, makes his club "one of the wealthiest, stand-alone football clubs in Australia." And Spirit hasn't even kicked a ball in anger.

Of course, there's also scope for interchanging of players and for coach Graham Arnold to travel to London to learn new ideas from Venables.

A Malaysian group which had bought into the club has divested much of its interest, although Spirit Services still hold equity on their behalf.

## Arnie & Bulldog Mates on a mission

**Northern Spirit knew it would require the acquisition of at least one marquee signing to help sell the new product. As luck would have it the league's newest club managed to secure two of the best in Robbie Slater and Graham Arnold.**

He was the centre of attention... and he appeared to enjoy every minute of it.

As the television and newspaper cameras followed his every move, there was a definite spring in the step as he found that extra little bit of pace or added a bit more venom to his shots on goal.

With his closely cropped ginger head bobbing around and mouth going a hundred miles an hour, the figure with the powerful legs was unmistakable. Yes, that's the Bulldog, or, as he is known in Australian soccer circles, Robbie Slater.

Watched by a gaggle of media types and his wife and two kids sitting on the hill of North Sydney Oval, Slater was relishing the sunny Sydney morning as he went through his first training session with Northern Spirit. He didn't look like he'd only been back in the country less than 48 hours. He looked more like a 17-year-old tasting the big time for the first time.

Incredibly, Slater has turned his back on a two-year contract with English club Wolves to join the Spirit on a three-year deal which will see out his illustrious career.

The lure of playing with and under his best mate Graham Arnold and the thought of begin involved in one of the most exciting things to happen to Australian soccer in years was too much for him to ignore.

With the blessing of Wolves, who released him from the final years of his contract, Slater packed his bags and his young family - wife Natalie, daughter Victoria and son Tom - and returned home to play in the Ericsson Cup for the first time in 10 years.

He admits coming back to Sydney to finish his career was the last thing he had envisaged three months ago.

"I really thought it would never happen (playing in the NSL again)," he said. "I was ready to finish my career in England in a couple of years then moving to France to live. But, Arnie did a lot of talking and convincing and here I am. Now that it has happened I am so excited."

As the club's first captain, Slater is looking forward to the challenge of putting Spirit into the hearts and minds of the Australian soccer community. "I think we



Slater in action for West Ham

have a lot to offer. The club has a terrific base, great board, fantastic playing roster and a coaching staff which will add a new dimensions of the game in this country," he boldly predicted.

And he believes Arnold will be an instant success as a coach. "Like me, Arnie has played overseas for 10 years," he said. "He has worked under some wonderful coaches and was smart enough to pick up ideas from them. "Whatever Arnie does, he does full on. There are no short cuts and this team will benefit from that."

Slater's 10-year career in Europe was a rollercoaster ride at times before he eventually carved out his own niche. "I have no regrets about my career overseas, it has been an experience and a half," he said. "But Spirit is a new path for me and I cannot wait

for himself in the toughest of professions. Only time will tell whether Arnold has the magic formula which will transform him from a great player into a great coach.

Football history is a litany of great players who just could not make the transformation from the field to the coach's bench, yet there is no reason to suggest Arnold will join those statistics. His former Socceroo teammates Frank Farina (Brisbane Strikers now Marconi) and Eddie Krncevic (Carlton) have already shown that clubs can prosper by taking the gamble with first-time coaches. In his debut as a coach Farina took the Strikers to their first Ericsson Cup title while Krncevic, who was in a similar situation to which Arnold now finds himself, took a new club from scratch and got them to within 90 minutes of a championship.

for the new season to kick off."

Neither, it seems, can Arnold.

Watching Arnold in action on a crisp Sydney winter's morning at North Sydney Oval as he directs the players, runs through the drills and coaxes them to run that extra metre it is hard to imagine that here we have a novice and not some seasoned 15-year campaigner. Indeed, there is an air of confidence and determination around him, an aura which says he was born to be a coach.

It's early days yet, but the signs are there that "Arnie", as he is known to his mates, is well on the way to making a successful niche for

After 10 years plying his trade on the playing fields of Europe and Japan, Arnold has come home to put something back into the game which has been his lifeblood. He could not have asked for a greater challenge than the one which faces him at Northern Spirit, but he brings with him a wealth of experience. He was smart enough to return soon after landing in Europe to join Dutch club, Roda, that his playing career would last forever and that coaching would eventually be an option.

Arnold took advantage of several opportunities to look over how clubs such as Ajax ran their business, often spending a week at a time to see how the coaching system worked.

What he saw blew him away. "It was another world over there," he said. "The system is remarkable from the juniors right up to the seniors. It is all interlinked. We learn so much from their system."

Arnold took in everything, gleaned new ideas and information from the various coaches he played under. Now he plans to put that to good use at Spirit... and it is already showing. Watching his training sessions, you could see the players were enjoying themselves as they ran through new and interesting drills. It was a new world for them. "This is a great opportunity for me," Arnold admits. "I'm grateful for the chance Spirit has given me, but I am confident I can do the

Under Arnold and assistant coach Ian Gray, Spirit will be fully professional and train twice a day. The club will have 18 players in their books, plus four apprentices. "We train in the morning and afternoon," Arnold said. "Everything is laid out for the players. We provide them with the training gear, which is washed by the apprentices after each session. "After the morning session a bus takes us to the North Sydney Leagues club where lunch is provided. We have a little break then return for the second session."

Without doubt, this is the biggest challenge of his illustrious career, but, as is typical with 'Arnie', he is taking it all in his stride. "I've been looking to do something like this for the last few years," he told Soccer Australia. "It's an exciting concept and I believe we can succeed on and off the field."



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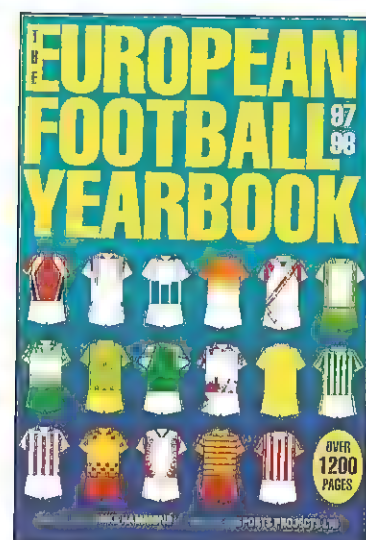
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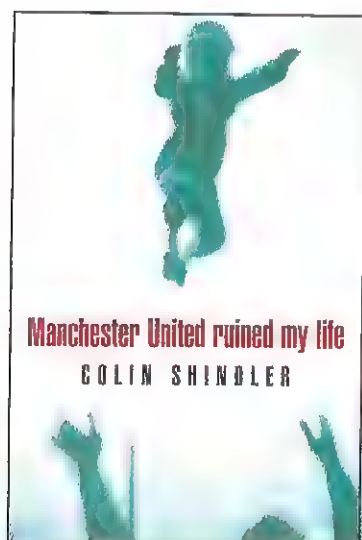
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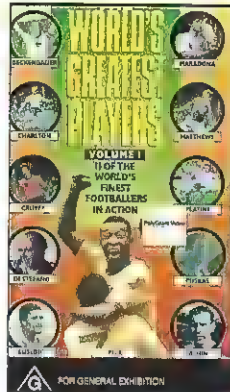
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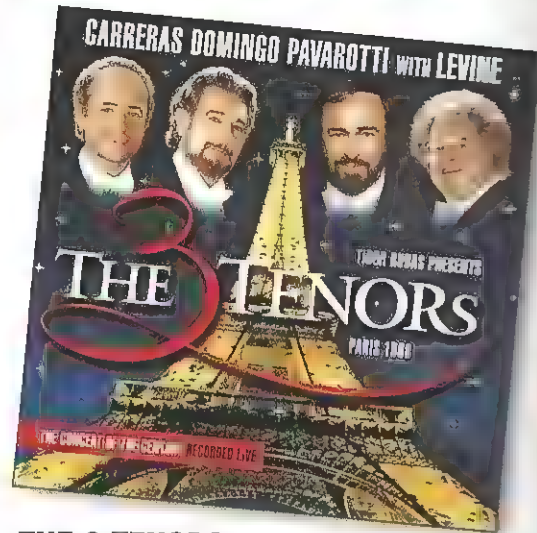
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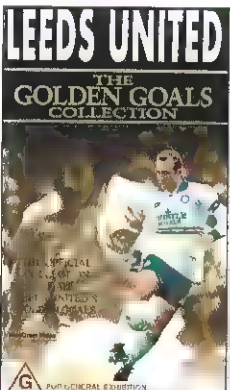
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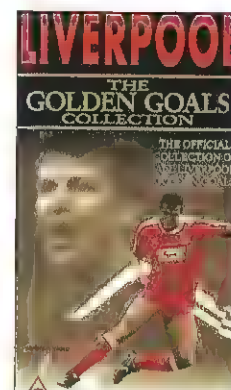
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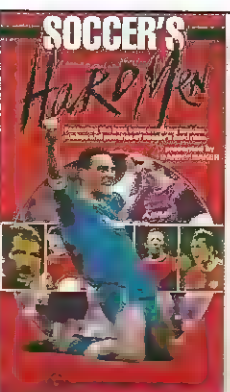
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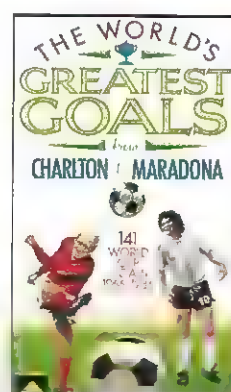
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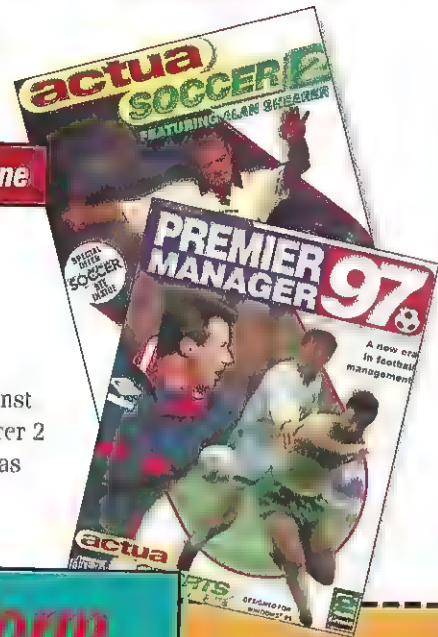
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# EXTRA TIME

News, Gossip & Humour  
on the World Game

compiled by Greg Blake



The waiting is over and the League's newest club is ready to roll off the showroom floor. Here is all the info you might need to know about the players who will shape the fortunes of Northern Spirit in 1998/99.

## That's the spirit

The expectations about Northern Spirit are enormous.

Unlike the similarly experimental Ericsson Cup debutants of recent years, the newest and most ambitious player on the Sydney scene is hoping for an immediate full-frontal assault on league attendance figures.

Where Perth Glory had initially hoped for a 4,000 or better figure in their inaugural home game two seasons ago and Carlton SC went into their very first home game of 1997/98 banking on around 7,000, Northern Spirit is raising the bar significantly.

According to David Mason from Javelin Australia the club is hoping for in excess of 18,000 through the turnstiles for Spirit's home debut at the 22,000-capacity North Sydney Oval.

That would already constitute a new league regular season record, breaking a Newcastle home gate of 18,367 set nearly two decades ago.

Mason also believes that an opening

season home average of around 10,000 per game is attainable despite only two clubs in league history - Newcastle KB United in 1978 and Perth Glory in 1996/97 - having been that box office friendly in their inaugural seasons.

Bouyed by the success of pre-season club membership sales and an estimated 6,000 crowd which turned out for a family day at the ground, Northern Spirit is hoping to tap into a local catchment area which includes some 25,000 registered players of a total population exceeding 500,000.

Mason also believes that the combination of playing floodlit Friday night home games and an impressive playing roster will further enhance the chances of success at the turnstiles.

Inevitably, the bulk of the responsibility for maintaining initial supporter interest will fall on the coaching and playing staff, the club banking on fielding a winning senior team from day one.

After much speculation the league's newest club settled on the following roster to take the club into the 1998/99 season.

**Head Coach:** Graham Arnold

**Assistant Coach:** Ian Gray

**Goalkeeping Coach:**

Steve Watson

**Captain:** Robbie Slater

**Senior Players:** Arnold, Slater, Ian Crook, Luke Casserly, Scott Ollerenshaw, Paul Bilokapic, Clayton Zane, Kresimir Marusic, Mark Rudan, Troy Granney, Eddie Bosnar, Michael Cunico, Tony Perinich, Gabriel Mendez, John Perosh, Nick Purdue, Paul Wearne, Peter Blazincic, Phil Moss

**Apprentices:** Paul Henderson, Matthew Langdon, Daniel Watkins, James Stubbs-Mills



# We say it's Blue & White Heaven

South Melbourne is set to become only fourth side to repeat as champions of the Ericsson Cup and the first since the Melbourne Knights dominated the mid-1980's.

That's the view of the staff of Soccer Australia magazine, who pooled their thoughts to come up with

how we think the 1998/99 season will take shape.

Only Sydney City (1980, 1981 and 1982), Marconi (1988 and 1989) and Melbourne Knights (1994/95 and 1995/96) have gone back-to-back as national champions in the previous 22 seasons of the NSL, but we believe all-conquering South Melbourne has

what it takes to join the ranks of the elite.

And no place in the top six for the league's oldest and newest club, Northern Spirit, although we suspect they'll go close in the race for the final.

Here's how the experts rate the teams for the new season.

## 1st SOUTH MELBOURNE

After winning six of their last seven finals games South Melbourne's finals hoodoo is dead and buried. All this team needs to do is to get to the play-offs to be a threat and that shouldn't be a problem, with this team boasting the best regular season record of any club in the 55-game period since coach Angie Postecoglou took charge.

## 2nd MARCONI FAIRFIELD

Favourite son Frank Farina returns to a club which has marked time in between two fleeting grand final appearances in the decade since the Stallions owned the Ericsson Cup. Based on last season's mini-revival we're backing Marconi to take another step under the little champ.

## 3rd WOLLONGONG CITY

The dashing Wolves stole our hearts last season and we're hoping for a repeat effort. Although they'll not take anyone by surprise this time around the spirit about the place is still buoyant and with fans flocking to Brandon Park in unprecedented numbers the road trips to the 'Gong this year will take on a nightmarish quality for opposing teams.

## 4th ADELAIDE CITY

With some ageing stars and an unsettled roster Adelaide City is in no shape to go all the way and return to the glory days. However three times championship-winning coach Zoran Matic returns and only a very stupid person would bet against a club which has been to the finals for nine consecutive seasons combined with a coach who has missed the play-offs once in his last eight years.

## 5th PERTH GLORY

It's now or never time for Perth, who have under-achieved on the park since joining the league in a blaze of glory in 1996/97. Rarely has Perth

earned its fanatical home town support but under new coach Bernt Stange and boasting enigmatic John Markovski this season could be pay back time to the fans.

## 6th SYDNEY OLYMPIC

An impressive new coaching staff and an administration hell-bent on dragging this club into the world of professionalism and the 1990's suggests a heady revival for a club close to self-destruction not too long ago. Olympic is about to take the first step forward in many years.

## 7th CARLTON

They won't be taking anyone by surprise as they did last year and it will be interesting to see how some of the lesser lights to shine last year stand up to the pressure of being the hunted rather than the hunters this year. Andrew Marth will be an asset but sure to miss the creativity of Kresimir Marusic and enigmatic genius of John Markovski.

## 8th NORTHERN SPIRIT

The Spirit might be willing but does coach Graham Arnold have the cattle to make a genuine impact? Arnold and Robbie Slater are top shelf and they've got some handy pick-ups in Luke Casserley and one or two others, but we say there or thereabouts in the top six race at best. However, for those looking for an omen bet the key is Marusic, who has taken three different clubs to grand finals in his three seasons in the Ericsson Cup.

## 9th SYDNEY UNITED

Big David Mitchell did the best coaching job of the last five years to get what was left of Sydney United to the finals last year but we can't see it happening again. The bar has been raised considerably by several clubs and United just doesn't have the guns to match it.

## 10th MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

An era ended with the loss of Andrew Marth to Carlton and it may take some time for the Knights to rebuild to a point where the finals are again a realistic possibility. So far the decline has been gradual, edging into the play-offs two years ago and just missing out last year. This time around they won't get that close.

## 11th CANBERRA COSMOS

If there is anything to be found in Canberra's playing roster Rale Rasic will find it. We don't think there's much there but Rasic has a track record of finding rays of light in darkness and Canberra will improve by grinding out a share of results.

## 12th ADELAIDE SHARKS

Plenty of new faces and an experienced coach Manfred Schaefer on board to try and revitalise a club which has wallowed in mediocrity for far too long. It might happen, but it won't happen overnight.

## 13th BRISBANE STRIKERS

John Kosmina gets the chance to put some life back into a team in transition since that marvellous title win two years back. As much as an unknown quantity as any team at this point, we still can't see them matching the big guns.

## 14th NEWCASTLE BREAKERS

Still a basically young team with huge potential, but we'd like to see some tangible proof of progress before suggesting the Breakers can make any significant headway.

## 15th GIPPSLAND FALCONS

A club, sadly, in decline and we predict a very bleak summer for the fast-flagging Falcons.



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